

The life and letters of Raja Rammohun Roy

RAMMOHUN ROY

THE

LIFE AND LETTERS

OF

RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

THE LATE

SOPHIA DOBSON COLLET

AND COMPLETED BY A FRIEND.

SECOND EDITION

Edited By

HEM CHANDRA SARKAR, M.A.

Calcutta:
1914



RAJA RAMMOHAN RAY.

U. RAY & SONS.

PREFACE.

THE Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy, which Miss Sophia Dobson Collet had undertaken to compile, but which was not finished at the time of her death, was completed by a gentleman at her dying request and was published privately by Mr. Harold Collet in 1900. The book, though greatly appreciated by the admirers of Raja Rammohun Roy, had not the opportunity of a wide circulation. When the first edition was exhausted I requested Mr. Collet to bring out another edition. Mr. Collet wrote to me that he had discharged his duty by bringing out the first edition and was not able to take the responsibility of another edition. On my requesting to give me permission to bring out a new edition, Mr. Collet gladly made over the copyright to me.

While preparing the present edition I thought it would be desirable to embody into it all the new matters that have been brought out up to this time regarding the life and work of Rammohun Roy. I have therefore tried to include in the present volume everything worth preserving out of the voluminous literature about Rammohun Roy that has grown up during the last thirty years. I have also embodied in it all the materials of permanent interest in Miss Mary Carpenter's Last Days of Raja Rammohun Roy, which was omitted by Miss Collet and the continuator, as that book has long been out of print and there does not seem to be any probability of its being reprinted in the near

future. My endeavour has been to make the present volume a complete up-to-date collection of all available information about the Father of modern India.

Though the present edition has considerably exceeded the compass of its predecessor, I have taken care to keep it in tact; all new matters have been given as foot-notes, when possible, or in the appendix and the introduction. In giving extracts I have scrupulously adhered to the spelling of the original sources. The footnotes supplied by me have been enclosed within brackets to distinguish them from the footnotes in the original.

I am happy that I have been able to prefix a brief sketch of the life of Miss Collet; my only regret is that it is not fuller. I hope, however, it may serve to remind the new generation of Brahmos our immense debt of gratitude to that noble-minded English lady.

The Nest, Kurseong.
15th. August, 1913. } HEM CHANDRA SARKAR.

CONTENTS



Sophia Dobson Collet.

SOPHIA DOBSON COLLET,

A Biographical Sketch.

BY THE EDITOR

Since its foundation, the Brahmo Samaj, the Theistic Church of modern India, has attracted the warm admiration and enthusiastic devotion of a few large-hearted Europeans—men and women. One of the most remarkable among these was the late Miss Sophia Dobson Collet. Her connection with the Brahmo Samaj was almost of the nature of a romance. Impressed by the magnetic personality of the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, whom she had seen in South Place Chapel, London, when she must have been a girl of ten or eleven, she remained a most loyal and devoted supporter of his church throughout life. Though not in complete agreement with the tenets of the new movement, she was ever vigilant in her solicitude and unwearied in her exertions for its advancement. No member, not even a devoted missionary, could have worked harder for, or watched with warmer interest, the progress of the infant church. A life-long invalid, ailing constantly from many bodily infirmities, she procured and preserved, from a distance of many thousand miles, every bit of information about Brahmos and the Brahmo Samaj which was unknown even to workers on the spot. To be able to read the publications concerning the new church, she, late in life, learnt the Bengali language. Her information about the Brahmo Samaj was wonderful in every way. It is not too much to say that she was the greatest authority on the contemporary history of this movement. She carried on extensive correspondence with many Brahmos. It is a pity that her letters have not been preserved and no re-

cord of her life has been published by those who knew her personally. To her the Brahmo Samaj owes, indeed, a deep debt of gratitude unspeakable ; and by this community her memory should ever be cherished with love and esteem. With a view to reminding the younger generation of Brahmos of their indebtedness to this noble-hearted English lady, the following brief sketch is prefixed to her greatest work, the Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy, by one who has always felt profound gratitude and veneration towards Miss Collet for her invaluable services to the Brahmo Samaj.

Sophia Dobson Collet was born on the 2nd Feb., 1822 in a Unitarian family of London long connected with India. Her great grand-uncle Joseph Collet, was Governor of Fort St. George (Madras) for about two years from 1719. The family has still in its possession a curious model, about two feet high, of Governor Collet in court-dress, which was made in India after the original and sent home to his brother, Samuel, from whom Miss Collet was descended. Her mother's brother, Captain Collet Barber also was in the service of the East India Company.

Miss Collet's father was a merchant. He died when she was but four years of age. Owing to an accident to her mother sometime earlier Miss Collet was an invalid from her birth, being afflicted with curvature of the spine. On account of her physical defects she seemed not to have been sent to school, but was carefully educated at home, principally by her mother's sister, Miss Mary Barber, a lady of remarkable sweetness and nobility of character and of eminent culture. Miss Barber was greatly loved, not only by her nieces and nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews but also by a large number of friends not related to her, who too would call her "Aunt Mary".

The family connections with India might have had some-

thing to do with Miss Collet's interest in the Brahmo Samaj. But the great impetus came when she saw Raja Rammohun Roy in South Place Chapel, London. Though then only a girl of tender age, she must have been greatly impressed, for throughout her life she retained a warm attachment for the Raja, whom she always used to call "Rammohun". In her later life she was most anxious to bring out a Life of the Raja. She often used to say to friends that her one desire was to live long enough to complete her book about Rammohun. How strong that desire was is evident from the note of the gentleman, who, at her earnest dying request, completed the work. Miss Collet wrote to him "I am dying. I cannot finish my 'Life of Rammohun Roy. But when I enter the Unseen, I want to be able to tell Rammohun that his Life will be finished. Will you finish it for me?"

The little girl of ten never forgot Rammohun or lost sight of his work. Quietly she kept watching and collecting every detail of information about the Samaj, which the Master had founded before leaving his beloved land to die in England.

Her earliest writing about the Brahmo Samaj that we have been able to trace was a letter in the *British Quarterly Review* for July 1869 refuting certain allegations against Keshub Chandra Sen. By this time she had put herself in communication with the rising leader of the progressive section of the Brahmo Samaj, for whom she entertained great admiration and regard until the Cooch Behar marriage brought about an unfortunate revulsion of feeling.

The *British Quarterly Review* for April 1869 published an article on the "Brahmo Samaj or (Theistic Church) of India", tracing its growth from its origin in 1830 under Rammohun Roy down to its latest phase under the influence of Keshub Chandra Sen. In this article, in spite of a general fairness of tone, the reviewer concluded by making the following grave

charge against Keshub: "Like Chaitanya and other great teachers of Hinduism, Keshub Chandra Sen permits the more degraded of his followers to prostrate themselves before him and worship him." Miss Collet at once wrote a letter to the editor contradicting the charge against Mr. Sen, whom she called her friend. She also wrote to the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Inquirer*, the *Unitarian Herald* and other papers to remove the false impression so created.

To vindicate the position of Keshub Chandra Sen more fully and to give the English public a correct idea of the Brahmo Samaj, Miss Collet contributed an article to the *Contemporary Review* of Feb., 1870 under the title of "Indian Theism and its Relatton to Christianity." With reference to it the *Illustrated London News* wrote: "*The Contemporary Review* is better than it has been for a long time. The most interesting paper is Miss Collet's excellent account of the Hindu religious reformers, the Brahmo Samaj." The *Spectator* similarly observed: "This number (of the *Contemporary Review*) is more than usually varied and interesting. The most noticeable article is Miss Collet's Essay on Indian Theism and its relation to Christianity, reviewing the present position of a movement which has been well-known for the last forty years as the Brahmo Samaj." In this article Miss Collet gave a full and clear account of the Brahmo Samaj from its foundation by Raja Rammohun Roy, through its development under Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, down to its then recent activities under Keshub Chandra Sen. The name of the Brahmo Samaj was not quite unknown in England. Miss Cobbe had previously sketched the rise and progress of the Brahmo Samaj down to 1866; and Miss Carpenter had also recently added some new details to the stock of popular information on the subject. But the true nature and power of the Brahmo Samaj, were never "traced out so clearly," (thus *Allen's Indian Mail* remarked) "as in

Miss Collet's paper". It created a great interest in the new religious movement of India among the more enlightened British public. The article was reproduced and commented upon widely in the British Press. As one main object of Miss Collet in writing the paper was to vindicate the position of Keshub Chandra Sen, who had been accused first of being a Christian at heart and subsequently of recanting his Christian confession, a large part of it was devoted to explaining the real position of Mr. Sen. These accusations were based on two lectures which he had recently delivered on "Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia" and on "Great Men" within an interval of about six months. Miss Collet, though avowedly a Christian who nursed, at this period, a faint hope that Keshub might yet accept Christianity, showed from the utterances of the Brahmo leader that there was no inconsistency in his position. An English contemporary, in reviewing the article, wrote: "Her avowed sympathy with the popular Christianity does not blind her to the real worth of its young Indian rival, or tempt her to mistake the fables of prejudiced opponents for truthful pictures of the Church established by Rammohun Roy, and largely renewed by Keshub Chandra Sen. In her essay there is none of the small unfairness to a rival worship which led the writer in the *British Quarterly Review* to accept the scandals lately circulated against the present leader of young India's revolt from Brahmanism. The Eastern tendency to hyperbole in jesture as well as speech gave Keshub Chandra Sen's enemies a seeming handle for accusing him of letting his disciples offer him divine honours, while the homage invariably paid by him to the human excellences of the Christian redeemer round the bitter resentment of those Brahmoists who saw in it a concession to the believers in a triune Godhead. At one moment he was accused of being an orthodox Christian; and then because another of his lectures referred to Christ as but one of many prophets, his

Christian critics charged him with cowardly recantation of his former sentiments. Miss Collet however has the good sense to see how little his various utterances contradict each other, and how entirely they all belie the notion of his seeking to set himself up as a superhuman mouth piece of the God he worships. She has the honesty to interpret the Brahmoist leader by himself, instead of taking the cue from others, or from isolated passages in Keshub Chandra Sen's writings. His lecture on Great Men, as she truly observes, supplemented the argument of his previous lecture on Jesus Christ. From the two thus taken together, it is easy to see how naturally such a man might hold up Jesus as the great bond of connection between East and West, the highest model of human holiness and purity, 'the greatest and truest benefactor of mankind', without for a moment pledging himself to any one article of the Trinitarian theology, or forgetting his own doctrine that 'eyery man is, in some measure, an incarnation of the divine spirit'." It will thus be seen that Miss Collet was entirely successful in her object of vindicating the position of Babu Keshub Chandra Sen. She concluded her advocacy of the Brahmo Samaj with the following fervent appeal to the British public: "They thirst after the 'One God without a second', the uncreated Father of spirits, and long to sweep away all that may seem to obscure His perfect light. Now this is surely a right instinct, and the indispensable foundation of all religion that deserves the name. It should also be remembered that, in God's 'education of the world,' every lesson has to be mastered separately. It took the Hebrews some centuries to learn their pure Theism, and only when that was for ever rooted in the heart of the race was the eternal son revealed. It is possible that some process may be in store for India, where the Gospel has hitherto taken so little hold of native minds as to suggest the idea that some hidden link needs to be supplied between it

and them. If so, such preparation is certainly beginning, however unconsciously under the Brahmo Samaj. Whatever their imperfections they are doing a work for God which greatly needs doing, and which He will surely 'lead into all truth' in His own time and in His own way. Let us not, then, refuse our Christian sympathies to these Hindu Unitarians, as fellow-worshippers of our common Father, fellow-learners of the teaching of His Son, fellow-seekers of the kingdom of Heaven. . . . ."

With her characteristic thoroughness she republished the article of the *Contemporary Review* in pamphlet form with some additions and alterations. The *Spectator* of London, in the course of a sympathetic review, characterised it as a "most able and interesting account of the religious tendencies of the movement". Keshub Chandra Sen's visit to England, of course, made Miss Collet very glad of the opportunity of closer association with his friend. She prepared the ground for him before hand and insured the success of his visit by awakening the interest of the British public in the Brahmo Samaj. Throughout the period of his sojourn in England, she worked strenuously and incessantly for making the visit productive of the best results. Indeed, much of the success of Mr. Sen's English visit and the warm reception accorded to him was due to the efforts of Miss Collet. She followed up her writings in the newspapers by preparing a volume of Mr. Sen's lectures. *Allen's Indian Mail* of March 29, 1870, contained the following announcement. "We are glad to learn that the interest lately shown by the English public in the progress of the sect which now owns him (Keshub Chandra Sen) as its chief leader is about to be gratified by the publication of some of the Baboo's lectures, including those on 'Christ', 'Great Men' and 'Regenerating faith,' all of them delivered in the last three or four years. These have already been printed in Calcutta, where the preacher's eloquence and breadth of

charity have been appreciated even by those who disliked or distrusted his theology. Miss Collet, the editor, who' has already thrown much light on the character of the new Theistic movement in India, also proposes, we believe, to accompany the lectures with a historical sketch of the Brahmo Samaj from the materials furnished by Mr. Sen himself.' The volume, which was named "The Brahmo Samaj," was published by Allen & Co. In addition to the lectures already mentioned, it contained also the lecture on "The Future Church." Later on, Miss Collet prepared another edition of it with the addition of some tracts, sermons and prayers of Mr. Sen. In fact, she took every possible measure to bring Mr. Sen and his utterances to the general notice of the Britlsh public.

Babu Keshubchandra Sen arrived in London in March and received a very cordial welcome. But there were some people who tried their utmost to belittle him and his work. They communicated to the press every little gossip that they could catch hold of, likely to discredit Mr. Sen in the public eye. With reference to these, the *Daily News* tactfully remarked: "Our Hindu visitor, Chunder Sen was doubtless aware when he came before the British public that, if he received the most cordial of welcomes, he would also be subjected to unsparing criticisms. Accordingly the festival at the Hanover-Square Rooms has been succeeded by letters in our own and other Journals, in which the Hindu reformer's mission and declarations are discussed with all the freedom that can be desired." Miss Collet took upon herself the task of guarding the reputation of her friend against these free lances of the Press.

The *Times* in its issue of the 13th June, 1870 published the following insinuating note from a correspondent: "While Babu Keshubchandra Sen is creating an interest in London which surprises many here who know the antipathy of his

community of Brahmos to Christianity, and while he himself is most sincerely urging the duty of England to send out teachers to the zenanas of India, a relation of his, a widow, has excited the animosity of the whole class of Brahmos by being baptised by the Church Missionaries. The lady who visited the zenana of Gunesh Soondery Debee and her mother had given both Christian instruction for two years. There was no compact, as has been asserted, and as is sometimes the case, to abstain from such instruction. The widow, a lady of 17, sought baptism after she had left her mother's house and had proved her knowledge and the sincerity of her motives: at one time her mother was about to do the same. She was allowed free intercourse with her family, who did their best, even to promising her marriage with a rich landholder, to shake her constancy. At last her mother was induced to sign an affidavit to the effect that the widow was only 14, and on this a writ of *Habeas Corpus* was issued. As no one restrained the lady, she appeared with a native and an English missionary in the court next morning. I happened to be present, and only one look at the widow was sufficient to show that she was above 16, the legal age of discretion. When the case finally came on, a native barrister, who, Bengali-like, had lectured in grandiloquent terms on the rights of woman and the woes of Hindu widows, rested his case on the occurrence of certain Hindu texts which justify the perpetual slavery of woman. Mr. Justice Phear was somewhat caustic in his remarks on this, showing that the *Habeas Corpus* would thus become not a means of personal liberty, but of hopeless imprisonment. The whole question was one of age and discretion. The judge decided that the lady was of the age of 17, and in the chambers examined her as to her knowledge. The trembling widow, before a Judge and two barristers, and questioned by a Hindu interpreter ignorant of Christian terminology, did not satisfy the Judge

as to her knowledge of 'Genesis, Exodus and Matthew', but he ruled thus :—'I could see nothing to indicate that she had not sufficient capacity to choose in the matter of her own creed. For nothing, I apprehend, is clearer than that personal discretion of that sort does not, in the eye of the law, depend upon the mental culture or intellect of the individual. If it were so, there would be an end of the liberty of the poor and the ignorant.' After another interview with her mother, the widow persisted in choosing Christianity, and was allowed to go to the mission-house. I feel assured Babu Keshub Chandra Sen would never have encouraged his followers in the silly intolerance which they have displayed. But those who, ignorant of Brahmoism, imagine that it is a broad sect of Christianity while even the most liberal missionaries declare that they find the Brahmos their most bitter opponents, would do well to study this case. A few, like Keshub Chandra Sen, are sincere, and will be unable to rest where they are. The majority are men who, dissatisfied with idolatry and the moral restraints of Hinduism, rejoice in a system too vague to control their conscience, too lax to demand moral courage or self-sacrifice." Another correspondent, referring to the same incident, wrote from Calcutta to the *Record* and drew from it the following moral : "While Keshub is exhibiting himself in England as the Reformer and Apostle of Progress, here his relations and confraternity are denying to a poor woman the most inalienable rights of personal liberty. Verily, it seems as if this most instructive case had happened providentially, at a time when the good people of England needed to have their eyes opened to the true character of the 'freedom of conscience' which 'theistic' professors are disposed to accord."

Miss Collet addressed a long letter to the *Spectator* refuting this charge of intolerance against the Brahmo Samaj. Having mentioned the allegations of the correspondents of

the *Times* and the *Record*, she wrote: "As these statements are being widely circulated here, may I request space to correct them on the authority of those concerned ?

"Babu K. C. Sen writes to me,—'It is not true, as has been alleged, that the girl is a near relative of mine. She is of the same caste (Vaidya) and may be a distant connection of our family. But I never knew her, and I never heard of her before the events in question happened. She was *not* a member of the Brahmo Samaj before her conversion to Christianity, but was a Hindu.' Babu K. C. Sen's brother, Babu Krishna B. Sen, writes to the Calcutta *Daily Examiner* to make precisely similar statements. The *Indian Mirror*, the organ of the Brahmo Samaj Mission, also contradicts the report that the girl was in any way connected with the Brahmo Samaj, and doubts family relationship to its leader,—and to the insinuation made by the missionaries that the B. Samaj had had some connection with the action taken by the plaintiffs for the recovery of the girl, the *Mirror* replies, 'to this statement we are authorised to give an unqualified contradiction.' Babu Keshub, also referring to the charge that the Brahmo Samaj persecuted the girl, writes to me This is simply untrue, and morally impossible. One or two individual Brahmos perhaps supported the case, as friends and relations of the mother of the girl, not as Brahmos. One of them was a cousin [Narendra Nath Sen] who was engaged as the attorney for the prosecution.' It is probable that this circumstance combined with the fact that the girl's family name was also Sen, gave rise to the idea that Babu Keshub's relation and confraternity were persecuting her.

"2. But the further question arises—supposing that a few Brahmos did interest themselves in the case, why were they arrayed against Christian Missionaries, unless from a bigoted repugnance to a native's conversion ? Because this appeared to be a cause, not of independent adult conversion, but of a

young girl eloping from home under the clandestine persuasion of a zenana teacher. Her actual age was not proved one way or the other ; her mother said she was fourteen, while she herself claimed to be over sixteen (the usual age of Hindu majority), and the Judge believed himself to be bound in law to accept the latter statement as made by the missionaries in return to the writ of *Habeas Corpus*. Upon this narrow technical point the decision turned ; but the Judge gave the following unfavourable estimate of the girl's state of mind as the result of his private examination of her :—'I could not help coming to the conclusion that the young lady is exceedingly ignorant and very ill-informed upon that particular subject which she says has engaged her attention, and which has been the particular purpose of instruction for the last two years. It appears to me from that short interview that she does not possess a single tangible idea which can be called correct. Her ignorance of the one sacred Book is in itself simply marvellous, and I am not blind to the danger which exists when a girl so young, so ignorant, and so inexperienced, leaves the society of those amongst whom she has lived all her life, and goes to live in the society of those strangers whose names even she does not know.' The Rev. Mr. Vaughn, who examined her previous to baptism, writes to the *Indian Mirror* saying that she was too frightened to give a clear account to the Judge of what she knew. On these points it is impossible to form a decision at a distance ; but it is noteworthy that the course taken by the missionaries in this affair has been condemned by nearly all the Calcutta Press, and that Christian public opinion is increasingly setting against these conflicts with heathen parents for the bodily possession of juvenile converts.

"3. Of course Babu Keshub frankly states his disapproval of this 'barrack system', as it is called. But in opposing it, he does not feel that he is opposing the missionaries, but only

some of their modes of conversion. That body for whom alone he is at all responsible, the 'progressive Brahmos,' are not, he says, enemies of Christianity. All the leading men among them honour Christ, and cannot, therefore, hate or persecute his servants. Trusting that these explanations may remove some of the misconceptions that are abroad,—

I am, Sir, &c.
S. D. Collet."

The sequel to this story was, briefly, as follows : About three months after her baptism, Ganesh Sundari, for reasons variously stated and never clearly explained, ran away from the mission compound to her mother's house. As her eldest brother refused to allow her to stay there, her uncle took her away. But the controversy in the Press continued for some time; and Miss Collet had to take up her pen every now and then. The lady was given shelter in a Brahmo home, as her Hindu relations would not admit her into their homes for fear of losing caste. This was made the occasion for fresh misrepresentations in the public press; and the Brahmos were accused of having enticed her away, of forging a letter in her name &c. A letter from one, Mr. Vaughn incriminating the Brahmos, having been reproduced in the *Spectator* of London, Miss Collet warmly defended her friends. She wrote: "It is true that she is now staying with a Brahmo, because no Hindu was found ready to receive her. In fact, the Brahmo gentleman did try if she might be taken under the protection of a Hindu, but in this he was not successful. Her mother could not for fear of caste, continue to give her shelter at home, and Mr. Vaughn himself admits that she is accessible to Christian visitors in her Brahmo residence." "It can be no pleasure to any Christian", she added in conclusion, "to dwell upon those miserable contentions, and I only write of them to clear my Brahmo friends from misapprehension."

In the midst of such unpleasant and vexatious controversies, Miss Collet continued her more serious literary work on behalf of the Brahmo Samaj. Her volume of Keshub Chandra Sen's lectures being well received by the English public, she prepared, before the end of the year 1870, another edition of it with the addition of some sermons and prayers. In reviewing this book, the *Glasgow Herald* (January 12, 1871) announced the preparation of a History of the Brahmo Samaj by Miss Collet. "Miss Collet," wrote the Glasgow paper, "by whom this volume is edited and who has done much already to acquaint us with Indian Theism, has in preparation a History of the Brahmo Samaj, which we are sure will be looked for with much interest, especially by the readers of Keshub Chandra Sen's Lectures and Tracts."

Shortly afterwards, Miss Collet brought out another book under the title of "Keshub Chandra Sen's English visit." It was a volume of more than six hundred pages filled with reports of various public meetings which Mr. Sen had attended during his English visit and the sermons and addresses delivered by him on those occasions. It was a work involving great labour; and it is surprising how Miss Collet with her infirmities could accomplish it. But for her careful compilation much of these materials would have been lost. In reviewing it, the *Spectator* (March 25, 1871) wrote: "The indefatigable pen by whose instrumentality mainly Keshub Chandra Sen and his great Theistic movement in India have been introduced to the literary notice of the English public, has here been employed, chiefly we imagine for the benefit of the great Hindoo Missionary's native followers, in preparing a tolerably complete record of his English visit, and all the more important receptions and addresses by which it was signalised. This volume will, no doubt, be read with great interest and gratification by those adherents of the Brahmo Samaj,—and they are not few,—

who can read English; and it will indeed be to them a valuable testimony to the genuine sympathy felt with them in England."

The interest awakened in England by the visit of Babu Keshub Chandra Sen led to the formation of a committee for rendering aid to the Brahmo Samaj. A meeting was held in London for the purpose on the 21st July, 1871. Miss Collet was one of the leading organisers. The meeting resolved that their "first efforts should be to raise sufficient money for the purchase of an organ for Mr. Sen's church in Calcutta, and do this at once as a beginning, so that at the great gathering in Calcutta in January 1872 this organ might be played, and so join all voices in one harmony." The result was the organ which is still in use at the Bharatbarshiya Brahma Mandir in Calcutta.

By this time the Brahmo Samaj was in the full swing of the controversy regarding the Brahmo Marriage Bill. The measure met with the successive opposition of the orthodox Hindus and the members of the Adi Brahmo Samaj. Miss Collet, with her characteristic energy, threw herself on the side of the progressive Brahmos. She advised and encouraged the Indians in England to send up a memorial in support of the Bill, and herself wrote in the newspapers to remove misconceptions. *Allen's Indial Mail*, which in those days was an influential journal about Indian questions, remarked thus in one of its issues: "It is evident that the provisions of the Bill must be modified, so as to ensure the older Brahmos perfect freedom to marry in their own way; and the title and preamble of the Bill must be so altered as to leave them no fair ground for complaint." In reply to this, Miss Collet wrote (September 26, 1871): "If you examine the Bill, you find that it does not in any respect interfere with the freedom of the older Brahmos to marry in their own way. The preamble states:—Whereas it is expedient to

legalise marriages between the members of the sect called the Brahmo Samaj, when solemnised according to the provisions of this Act &c.' thus leaving the question entirely open whether marriages between Brahmos solemnised in other ways require legislation or not."

With her usual thoroughness, Miss Collet prepared and published a pamphlet on "Brahmo Marriages, their past history and present position" indicating the difficulties of the progressive Brahmos. The *Spectator* thus reviewed the pamphlet: "The author explains very clearly the difference between the old idolatrous marriages and those which the Indian Theists have celebrated and the doubts which have arisen as to the legal validity of the latter. She shows how difficult it was to remedy the mischief without bitterly alarming native public opinion—how any remedy which only required persons anxious to enter into a valid marriage without idolatrous rites, to *disclaim* adhesion to the orthodox religious systems of India, would have the effect of subverting caste, because not compelling those who made such a disclaimer to regard themselves wholly outcasts from Hindu Society. On the other hand, the proposal to legalise only the marriages of persons who should declare themselves adherents of the Brahmo faith alarmed the old school conservative Brahmos, who profess to believe their marriages (though not idolatrous) quite legal, and who fear greatly any wider breach between themselves and Hinduism. On the whole subject Miss Collet passes a very clear judgment and shows herself altogether much more mistress of the question than the writer who not long ago discussed it, not too liberally in the *Pall Mall Gazette*." The *Indian Mirror* (Oct. 26, 1871) wrote: "Among the pamphlets we have received by the last mail is one entitled 'Brahmo Marriages: their past history and present position' by Miss S. D. Collet. It is gratifying to find that the able

author, whose name is quite familiar to our readers, has taken up the most important topic of the day in India and treated it in so exhaustive and convincing a manner as is most likely to influence public opinion in England. The pamphlet exhibits an amount of research which is truly remarkable." This pamphlet, the narrative portion of which was subsequently embodied by Miss Collet in her Brahmo Year-Book for 1879, remains the clearest and fullest history of that exceedingly interesting episode in the reform movement of modern India *viz.*, emancipation from the tyranny of caste and priesthood in matters of matrimony. It records how, step by step, the present law regulating reform marriages came to be enacted.

Now we pass on to a more elaborate and sustained effort on the part of Miss Collet to present the work and activities of the Brahmo Samaj to the public. This was her compilation of the "Brahmo Year-Book," which came out year after year for seven years from 1876 to 1882. Considering the fact that the compiler was not herself a member of the community, nor had she any direct personal acquaintance with the churches the minutest details of the work and organisation of which she undertook to chronicle from a distance of many thousand miles, the work must be pronounced a marvellous monument of labour and the power of keeping accurate information. The seven volumes of Miss Collet's Brahmo Year-Book are together a store-house of information about the Brahmo Samaj during a most important epoch in its history. They include the period of the zenith of Babu Keshub Chandra Sen's ascendancy in the Brahmo Samaj, immediately preceding the Cooch Behar marriage and the troubled times that followed until the practical conclusion of the disastrous agitation. When Miss Collet commenced the work, she had no idea of the coming catastrophe. Her object in undertaking the compilation has been told in the preface to the

first volume : "The Brahmo Samaj or Theistic Church of India is an experiment hitherto unique in religious history. It has been received with warm sympathy by some observers, with suspicion and dislike by others ; but very little is generally known of its actual condition or principles beyond what may be gleaned from the speeches and writings of a few of its leaders who have visited England ; consequently, the most absurd misapprehensions exist on the subject in many quarters. The object of the present publication is to supply periodically recent and reliable information on the chief representative features of this Church, so interesting alike to the practical Christian and religious philosopher." It will thus be seen that the main object of Miss Collet was to enlighten the British public about the Brahmo Samaj. But the Brahmo Year-Book, must have been not much less illuminating to the Indian reader and even to Brahmos themselves. For, Miss Collet, with a marvellous patience and perseverance, collected and set forth every scrap of information regarding even the smallest Brahmo congregations and institutions scattered throughout the length and breadth of India, the existence of many of which had not been known to Brahmos themselves in other parts of the country, so that Miss Collet's publications came as a revelation to contemporary Brahmos; and to succeeding generations of Brahmos they will always be a most valuable and interesting record of their church at a very critical epoch. The work must have involved an enormous amount of correspondence and a very careful reading of the periodicals and publications of and about the Brahmo Samaj : and it is a wonder how Miss Collet, with her chronic ill-health, could manage it in the way she did. The arduousness of her labours will be understood from the fact that no one could continue the work after she had been compelled to give it up on account of increasing infirmities, though repeated efforts were made by

persons in actual contact with the work of the Brahmo Samaj.

The series begins with the year 1876. The first volume opened with a general introduction giving a brief sketch of the history of the Brahmo Samaj from its foundation and an account of its ideals and existing organisation. Then followed a general survey of the Brahmo Samajes and their work with a complete list of Theistic congregations in India and a detailed account of the more important among them. The next volume was prepared on the same plan, with the addition of an account of Brahmo literature and of new developments in the Samaj. But soon after the publication of the second volume, the Brahmo Samaj was swept over by the whirlwind of the Cooch Behar marriage controversy, and necessarily the greater part of the third volume was occupied with it. The incident proved a great shock to Miss Collet. We have seen with what warm admiration she regarded Babu Keshub Chandra Sen at first and how zealously she defended him against attacks in the press. The change from that feeling must have been most painful. In after life she used to call it her greatest "idol-breaking." But her interest in the Brahmo Samaj did not diminish with her disappointment in Keshub Chandra Sen. Even in the darkest days of that trouble, she did not lose her faith in the Brahmo Samaj. With the most anxious solicitude she watched the progress of the schism and chronicled it year after year with the utmost scrupulousness and marvellous insight. She did not thrust her own opinion on the readers, but in disputed matters gave the versions of both the parties, leaving the reader to draw his own conclusion. The Brahmo Year-Book for 1878 will remain as the fullest source for the history of the second schism in the Brahmo Samaj.

With the gradual subsidence of the agitation the points at issue could be more clearly seen and the

resulting situation better understood. Miss. Collet did not share the popular European notion that with the break-up of the power of Keshub Chandra Sen the Brahmo Samaj had suffered a total ship-wreck. But she had the insight to see a renewed vitality of the Brahmo Samaj in this momentous struggle for principle. Miss Collet watched with great satisfaction the gradual development of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. In the preface of the Year-Book for 1880, she writes : "Now it is perfectly clear that the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj have fairly entered upon this coustitutional course, and are really acquiring habits of mutual help and combined action which have already accomplished excellent practical results and are in themselves a most wholesome discipline." She could now look upon the future of her favourite Theistic movement in India with hope and assurance. She quoted with hearty approval the judgment of Count Goblet d'Alveila that the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj "appears to be henceforth unquestionably called to take the direction of the movement which the church of Keshub seems to have lost beyond recall."

In the volumes for 1880 and 1881 Miss Collet gives detailed accounts of the development of Mr. Sen's views in his later life leading to the adoption of the name 'New Dispensation.' Babu Pratap Chandra Mazumdar, the Asst. Secretary of the Brahmo Samaj of India, criticised some of the statements in the volume for 1880. To this Miss Collet replied in the volume for 1881 ; and she substantiated her statements by quotations from the authoritative publications of the Brahmo Samaj. At the same time, where she had been wrong, she frankly admitted and apologised for her misstatements. As a historian, Miss Collet was scrupulously fair and impartial, and her aptitude and passion for collecting facts marvellous. Many Samajes bore testimony to the accuracy of her statements and passed resolutions conveying their gratitude to her

for her self-imposed, disinterested labours in compiling the Brahmo Year-Book. It is much to be regretted that she did not write a complete History of the Brahmo Samaj which the *Glasgow Herald* had announced in 1871 that she had been preparing. The reason for the non-fulfilment of this project was her extreme scrupulousness as a historian. She would not write a single sentence for which she had not unquestionable authority. But though she did not herself write a History of the Brahmo Samaj, it is to her initiative that we owe Pandit Sivanath Sastri's two recent volumes on the subject. For, she it was who induced Pandit Sastri during his visit to England to write a complete History of the Brahmo Samaj. Besides the article in the *Contemporary Review* already noticed, she published two other pamphlets bearing on the history of the Brahmo Samaj, one in 1871, called An Historical Sketch of the Brahmo Samaj, and the other in 1884 under the heading, Outlines and Episodes of Brahmic History. Not only are they very convenient sketches of the modern Theistic movement in India for the ordinary public unacquainted with the history of the Brahmo Samaj, but even many Brahmos will find in them many incidents and episodes to interest them in the history of their church, not known to them before.

Now we turn to the last but not the least of Miss Collet's manifold services to the Brahmo Samaj—her Life of the Founder. Rammohun Roy died in 1833. Nearly fifty years passed away but no adequate biography of the great religious reformer of modern India was written. In 1866, just on the eve of her visit to India, Miss Mary Carpenter published a small volume, entitled "The Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy," but it was not a complete biography. The necessity of compiling such a biography was suggested at the second of the memorial meetings organised by the endeavours of the newly constituted Sadharan Brahmo Samaj

in January 1880. In 1881, Babu Nagendra Nath Chatterjee brought out a Life of Rammohun Roy in Bengali. It was a comparatively small volume. In the subsequent editions, however, the author greatly enlarged it, in which task he was largely indebted to the researches of Miss Collet. But as yet there was nothing which could be given to the non-Bengali reader. How early Miss Collet conceived the idea of writing a Life of the Raja cannot now be definitely ascertained, but from her ardent admiration for Rammohun it would seem that she had had the work long in view. In the Brahmo Year-Book for 1882, while reviewing the Bengali Life of the Raja by Babu Nagendra Nath Chatterjee, she wrote: "The author has kindly granted me permission to make use of it in the biography of the Raja which I hope soon to compile." But the book was not quite ready even at the time of her death, which took place on the 27th March, 1894. The long delay is another proof of her scrupulous desire to be thorough and accurate as a historian. Mr. N. Gupta, perhaps the last Indian gentleman to whom she could speak, writes to me to say that on her death-bed she told him "her only regret was that she could not finish the Life of Rammohun, though she had neglected her own affairs for the purpose." But she would not allow the work to appear before the public until she should have satisfied herself that all available sources had been consulted. For twelve long years she worked incessantly, and devoted to this work every moment that she could snatch in the midst of her failing health. To verify one date she would work six months. With what conscientious scrupulousness she used to write will be abundantly clear from the published fruit of her labours. She consulted every available authority in England and in India. She never rested satisfied with second-hand information, but always tried to get at the original sources. Her Life of Rammohun Roy is an ideal of conscientious biography. Thoroughness, passion for perfection, was the most prominent feature of Miss Collet's character. We may, in this connection, transcribe the following interesting confessions of Miss Collet, kindly supplied by one of her nieces as having been written by Miss Collet when it was the fashion to get one's friends to write their confessions in one's album :—

"Your favourite virtue—Thoroughness.

Your favourite qualities in man—Faithfulness to a noble ideal, blended with sense and spiced with humour.

Your favourite qualities in woman—Sweetness and sense, bracketed equal, with conscience to take care of them.

Your favourite occupation—Writing theology.

Your chief characteristic—Enthusiasm streaked with cowardice.

Your idea of happiness—Listening to perfect music perfectly executed.

Your idea of misery—Tooth-ache in the middle of the night.

Your favourite colour and flower—Blue. White garden lily.

If not yourself, who would you be?—An accomplished M. A. Oxon, just beginning active life.

Where would you like to live?—In the suburbs of London.

Your favourite prose authors—R. H. Hutton, F. W. Newman, Emerson Colonel Higginson.

Your favourite poets—Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Whittier, Lowell.

Your favourite painters and composers—Raphael, Guido, Handel, Mendelssohn, Miss Flower.

Your favourite heroes in real life—St. Augustine, Mendelssohn, Mr. Gladstone, Keshub C. Sen.

Your favourite heroines in real life—Vivia Perpetua and Mrs. Adams

Your pet aversion—Hypocrisy and overbearingness.

What character in history do you most dislike?—John Calvin.

What is your present state of mind?—Tranquil satisfaction.

Your favourite motto—"Open to the light."

(November 27. 1876—(Signed) Sophy Dobson Collet.

A word or two about Miss Collet's religious views will perhaps be looked for here. From her enthusiasm for the Brahmo Samaj one is likely to conclude that she was a pure theist; but that impression would notbe correct. Miss Collet was, as we have seen, born in a Unitarian family. But her religious views underwent many changes. She had passed through many and interesting phases of religious experience. When she had passed out of her inherited Unitarian convictions, she was for some time a sceptic. Subsequently she came under the influence of the late Mr. R. H. Hutton, the editor of the *Spectator*, who had been in his earlier life trained for the Unitarian ministry. With Mr. Hutton she approached, if not actually joined, the Church of England, though of course she was always very broad and liberal. She has left an autobiographical sketch describing the successive phases of her religious experience. Unfortunately, however, it has not been published.

The object of this brief sketch would not be fulfilled without a grateful acknowledgment of Miss Collet's warm reception of, and valuable help to, successive batches of Indians who went to England from the time of the visit of Keshub Chandra Sen and Ananda Mohan Bose down to the date of her death. Brahmo gentlemen in London found in her a most kind friend and well-wisher, ever ready to assist them with sound advice and guidance. How cordial was that relation and how valuable her help will be understood from the following letter written to Miss Collet by the late Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose, when leaving England at the end of his four year's stay. He wrote from the *S. S. Hindustan* : "I sit down to send a few lines bearing my love and kindest remembrances to you. How sorry I felt at the shortness of our parting interview, when I had had to tear myself away for another engagement, and at my inability to see you again, as I had some faint hopes of doing ! * * * But however short the time, I could see you at the last ; amongst the pleasantest of all the memories I carry with me of the years I have spent in England will be the thought of the happiness and pleasure I have derived from your acquaintance and friendship. A recollection of this will ever be engraved in my heart, and often and often I shall look back with regretful joy on those days when I have been with you, and derived a strengthening and cheering influence from your example and words." Miss Collet kept up regular correspondence with many Brahmo friends. Though not in complete agreement with the Brahmo Samaj in theology, she had completely identified herself with it in interest. The Brahmo Samaj was uppermost in her heart and mind. The Brahmos felt her to be one of themselves. She used to write in Bengali very affectionately to many Brahmo ladies whom she had never seen. The Brahmo Samaj never had a warmer friend and more sincere well-wisher. Miss Collet's memory should be cherished with the kindest regard by successive generations of Brahmos for the many and valuable services she rendered to their cause.

INTRODUCTION.

BY THE EDITOR

THE history of India falls into three broad, clearly-marked divisions. There are the early days of exuberent vitality, creative vigour, many-sided progress, stretching far into the dim past—the India of the Rishis, of the Upanishads, of the Buddhist gospel of love and service, the India of the epics and the schools of philosophy. We might denote the whole of this long period by the one comprehensive name of Ancient India. This was followed by a long era of gradual decline, of intellectual and spiritual stagnation, of moral and social degradation, of superstition and servitude—a veritable dark age which might be called Mediæval India. Since contact with the West awakened the country from this long death-like slumber, a fresh career of honour and distinction, of intellectual power and spiritual grandcur, of social regeneration and national progress has been ushered in. This new era has been significantly called the Rammohun Roy epoch ; for he it was who heralded this era embodying as he did the purest and loftiest aspirations of New India in his own wonderful life and giving inspiring expression to them with his prophetic voice.

Rammohun Roy was truly an epoch-making man. No epoch in the history of a nation can be more fittingly named after a man than modern India after Raja Rammohun Roy ; and no man has a juster right to be called the prophet of an era than the Raja of the present epoch in India. Rammohun Roy was born at a momentous juncture in the history of India and was, under the providence of God, destined to mould the national life in all its bearings, as few have done in the history of the race. The political, social and religious life

of New India has been permanently stamped with the personality of Rammohun Roy and his name will remain indissolubly associated with the history of modern India.

At the time of Rammohun Roy's birth a dense cloud of darkness was brooding over the country. For centuries together the muses of India had been silent. No voice of commanding genius relieved the silent monotony of this long period. The great masters of Sanskrit literature had long since disappeared, while the vernacular literature of none of the provinces had secured any eminence or recognition. The profound speculation of the Indian mind had become a thing of the past ; the schools of philosophy were extinct and in their place pedantic wrangling on trivial technicalities passed for profundity of thought and learning. The fountain of religious inspiration was not indeed quite dried up. The inmost spring of India's national life welled up again and again, but only to be lost in the surrounding wilderness. The fate of the great religious teachers and movements of this dark age served only to bring into clearer view the evil days which had fallen on the land. Their message of spiritual religion was not understood and their followers soon degenerated into sects, intensifying the very evils which the Masters had striven to eradicate. The last of the prophets was Sri Chaitanya of Nadia, who flourished in the fifteenth century ; his gospel of love gradually sank into hollow sentimentalism in the hands of his unworthy followers.

With the decay of knowledge and the deadening of conscience moral corruption and social degeneracy passed unchallenged in the country. Blind superstition and gross idolatry reigned supreme from one end to the other. Outward ceremonials, scrupulousness about eating and drinking, signs and symbols had usurped the place of living faith, cleanliness of heart and integrity of conduct. Personal purity in the male sex was not considered necssary at all. The sense of

justice was dead. Men could marry any number of wives successively or even simultaneously ; but women, even little girls of five or six, if they happened to lose their husbands, whom perhaps they had never seen except at the hour of the so-called wedding, were not allowed to marry again, but were condemned to drag on a miserable existence deprived of all the comforts of life, or, what was still more inhuman, burnt alive on the funeral pyre of their husbands. In some parts of the country female children were killed as soon as they were born ; and the first born were not unoften thrown into the rivers in propitiation of the gods.

Politically, the country was passing through the confusion of a transition period. The Mahommedan sovereignty had collapsed. The Mahrattas proved unequal to holding the falling sceptre. The sovereignty of the land was inevitably passing into the hands of the East India Company. By the time Rammohun Roy reached manhood the chapter of this conquest was practically completed. But the British people had not yet fully assumed the duties and responsibilities of sovereignty. Their main concern was yet commerce and acquisition of wealth. The Mahommedan system of administration was allowed to continue with as little disturbance as possible. The new masters of the country were sorely apprehensive of losing their recently acquired territories by a sudden rising of the fanatical orientals. They seemed to have been mortally afraid of exciting the religious prejudices of the people. Successive Governors, though keenly aware of the inhuman cruelty of *Sati*, dared not intefere with it, lest the Company's rule should be in danger. Education was not yet considered to lie within the province of Government. There were no schools throughout the length and breadth of the country, except the *Tols* and *Maktabs* and *Pathsalas* where Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian were taught with the elements of arithmetic.

Such was the condition of the country when Raja Rammohun Roy was born. We cannot explain his career and work by his environments. Rammohun Roy was undoubtedly not the product of his age. Rather, the age was largely his creation. Rammohan Roy had none of the benefits and facilities of education which the young men of a generation or two later enjoyed, mainly through his labours. Politically, socially and educationally there was not yet any glimpse of light. The greatest glory of Rammohun Roy lay in this, that in the midst of thick, brooding darkness he saw afar the vision of a New India and bravely laboured against large odds, as will be seen in the following pages, to bring it nearer. Rammohun Roy seems to have early realised the mission of his life and steadily prepared himself for it. Before he completed his sixteenth year the religious degradation of his country disclosed itself to him and he wrote against the current idol-worship with such force that it led to the expulsion of the boy of sixteen from his ancestral home. Rammohun Roy cheerfully accepted the ordeal and proceeded to utilise it in preparing himself for his life-work. The four years of exile were spent in the study of the religious systems of the past under the reputed guardians of the ancient lore and a personal survey of the condition of the country. In the course of his wanderings Rammohun Roy went up as far as Tibet to study Buddhism. Soon after his return home he again proceeded to Benares and spent about 12 years in close and earnest study in that ancient seat of Hindu learning and orthodoxy and it must have been here that the foundation was laid of his vast erudition in Sanskrit literature. Towards the latter half of this period he began to learn English ; possibly his chief object in this was the investigation of the Christian scriptures, for at this time he had no desire to enter Government service, it being only due to the pressing request of Mr. Digby that he subsequently accepted a post under him.

Even while in the service of Government he was steadily and diligently preparing himself for the main work; he had all along contemplated an early retirement with a view to devote himself entirely to the great mission of his life, which he was enabledto do in 1814, when he settled in Calcutta with all his plans fully matured.

That work comprised the entire range of national aspirations and activities. Raja Rammohun Roy was not merely the founder of a religion; religion was no doubt the main spring and the chief concern of his life, but his wonderful genius in its all comprehensive reach embraced the whole national life and his breath of inspiration and his consecrated labours succeeded in creating a New India—an India new all round. In 1814, when Raja Rammohun Roy came to settle in Calcutta. the country was yet in deep slumber; by 1830, when he left our shores for England, the new life fairly set in, and the beginnings of thse political, social and religious activities which have since spread over the whole country were clearly visible. During the short interval the Raja laid the foundations of the various movements which together make up a nation's life. Here was the fountain whence the streams of national life and activities issued and rapidly spread over the land. Let us briefly indicate the connection of Raja Rammohun Roy with the awakening of India at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The great proximate cause of the national awakening was the introduction English education. Raja Rammohun Roy with his prophetic vision realised that, if India was to rise and take her legitimate place among modern nations, she must have modern scientific education after the model of the West. Accordingly, as soon as he was settled in Calcutta, he began to move for the introduction of English education. But in this, not only was he hampered by the indifference and prejudices of his own countrymen, but even many well

meaning Englishmen of high position were against him, as would be seen from the detailed narratives of his life. When Rammohun Roy started work in Calcutta, there were no public schools worth the name for the teaching of English anywhere in India. Ramkamal Sen, the author of the first English Bengali dictionary, discribes in his preface how the first English captain who sailed over to infant Calcutta, sent ashore asking for a dobhashia or interpreter. The Seths who acted as middlemen between the English merchants and the native weavers in the sale and purchase of piece goods, in their ignorance, sent a *dhobi* or washerman on board. To that washerman, who made a good use of the monopoly of the English that he acquired, Ramkamal Sen ascribes the honour of being the first English scholar amongst the people of Bengal. The mere vocabulary of nouns, adverbs and interjections which for nearly a century made up all the English of the Bengalis became enriched and improved when Sir Eliza Impey established the Supreme Court in Calcutta in 1774. The growing business of the court made the next generation of middle class Bengalees a little more familiar with English. Interpreters, clerks, copyists and agents were in demand alike by the Government and the mercantile houses. Self interest stimulated enterprising Bengali youths to learn English from European and Armenian adventurers. One, Sherbourne, a European, kept a school in the Jorasanko quarter, where Dwarkanath Tagore learned the English alphabet. Martin Bowl in Amratola taught the founder of the wealthy Seal family. Aratoon Petroos was another who kept a school of fifty or sixty Bengalee lads. The best among the pupils became teachers in their turn, like the blind Nityananda Sen in Colootolah and the lame Udyacharan Sen, the tutor of the millionaire Mullicks. As remarked above, the Government had not yet undertaken the responsibility of public instruction. The year previous to the settlement of

Raja Rammohun Roy in Calcutta, the Court of Directors, under the pressure of the Parliament, enjoined "that a sum of not less than a lakh of rupees, in each year, shall be set apart, and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of knowledge of the sciences among the British territories of India." But it was not till many years afterwards that this sum was made available for the promotion of English education. In 1780 Warren Hastings had founded the Madrassa, a Mahommedan College in Calcutta for giving instruction to Mahommedan boys in Arabic and Persian. In 1791 Jonathan Duncan, Resident at Benares, did the same thing for the Hindus by establishing the Benares Sanskrit College, avowedly to cultivate "their laws, literature and religions." The Fort William College was established at Calcutta in 1800 for the benefit of the members of the civil service. But up to the arrival of Rammohun Roy in Calcutta there were no public schools for the systematic teaching of English to Indian boys.

No sooner had Rammohun Roy settled in Calcutta than he began to concert measures for the introduction of English education among his countrymen. It will be seen that all the three agencies that have been at work during the last hundred years, for the diffusion of education on western lines in India, viz, private bodies, Government institutions, and Christian missions, owed largely to his initiative in the beginning. The earliest public institution for the teaching of English in India was perhaps the Hindu College of Calcutta, established in 1819. It owed its origin to a discussion at the *Atmiya Sabha* of Rammohun Roy in 1815. The story of the establishment of that memorable institution was told by the great missionary educationist, Dr. Alexander Duff, before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1853, and we cannot do better than reproduce it here. Dr. Duff said in his evidence :—

"The system of English education commenced in the following very simple way in Bengal. There were two persons who had to do with it,—one was Mr. David Hare, and the other was a native, Rammohun Roy. In the year 1815 they were in consultation one evening with a few friends as to what should be done with a view to the elevation of the native mind and characters. Rammohun Roy's position was that they should establish an assemply or convocation, in which what are called the higher or purer dogmas of Vedanta or ancient Hinduism might be taught; in short the Pantheism of the Vedas and their Upanishads but what Rammohan Roy delighted to call by the more genial title of Monotheism. Mr. David Hare was a watchmaker in Calcutta, an ordinary illiterate man himself; but being a man of great energy and strong practical sense, he said the plan should be to institute an English School or College for the instruction of native youths. Accordingly he soon drew up and issued a circular on the subject, which gradually attracted the attention of the leading Europeans, and among others, of the Chief Justice Sir Hyde East. Being led to consider the proposed measure, he heartily entered into it, and got a meeting of European gentlemen assembled in May 1816. He invited also some of the influential natives to attend. Then it was unanimously agreed that they should commence an institution for the teaching of English to the children of higher classes, to be designted the Hindu College of Calcutta."

Rammohun Roy threw himself into the project with characteristic energy but, with a rare self-effacement, voluntarily withdrew from the committee, as some of the orthodox Hindu leaders on account of his religious views, objected to being his colleagues on it; which, however, did not affect his zealous exertions in its behalf from outside.

The share of Raja Rammohun Roy in inducing the Government to interest itself in the introduction of English

education in India is wellknown. We have already mentioned that in 1813 the Director of the East India Company decided to set apart a lakh of rupees from the revenues of the country for educational purposes, when the question of the utilisation of this amount came up for discussion, there arose a difference of opinion among the high officials, including the members of the Council of the Governor-General; one party wished to devote the Government grant to giving stipends to Pandits and Moulvis and scholarships to Arabic and Sanskrit students and to publishing oriental manuscripts for the revival of classical learning, and were called the Orientalists. The other party were for establishing schools and colleges on the model of English public schools for the spread of western scientific and literary education and were called the Anglicists. The battle raged for several years, till it was finally settled by the memorable decree of Lord Bentink's Council of the 7th March 1835. Rammohun Roy had a large share in bringing about this momentous decision. At first the Orientalists were in the ascendant and succeeded in securing the Government grant for their purpose. In 1823 Raja Rammohun Roy addressed to Lord Amherst, then Governor General, a long letter which would alone immortalise his name. In it he advocated by unanswerable arguments the introduction of western education after the English model. The story has been told in full detail by Miss Collet. All we need point out here is that, but for Rammohun Roy's seasonable intervention, the introduction of English education in India might have been indefinitly, at least for a long time, postponed. Though no immediate satisfactory reply was given to his letter, the success of the cause of the Anglicists now become assured; for when Rammohun Roy wrote on behalf of the dumb millions of India, demanding modern scientific education, it was felt that the ultimate triumph of the plea could not be far off.

Equally prominent was the part Raja Rammohun took in drawing the Christian missions into the field of Indian education. As soon as Rammohun Roy became acquainted with the several Christian denominations of Europe and America, he began to interest them in the problem of Indian education. He lost no opportunity of pressing upon them the importance and advantages of imparting modern scientific education to the people of India. We find him repeatedly writing to Unitarian leaders of his acquaintance in England and America "to send as many serious and able teachers of European learning and science and Christian morality unmingled with religious doctrines as your circumstances may admit, to spread knowledge gratuitously among the native community." The Unitarians were not able to render the aid desired, but a similar request at another quarter bore excellent fruits. Rev James Bryce, the first Scottish Chaplain in Calcutta, was persuaded by Raja Rammohun Roy to write to the home authorities to send missionaries for the spread of knowledge and learning. Let us tell the story in the words of Dr. George Smith, the biographer of Dr. Duff. He writes: "It was Rammohun Roy too, who was the instrument of the conversion of the first chaplain, Dr. Bryce, from the opinion of the Abbe Dubois that no Hindu could be made a true Christian to the conviction that the past want of success was largely owing to the inaptitude of the means employed. Encouraged by the approbation of Rammohun Roy, Dr. Bryce presented to the General Assembly of 1824 the petition and memorial which first directed the attention of the Church of Scotland to British India as a field for missionary exertions." Rammohun Roy, as an attendant of the St. Andrews Kirk, supported this memorial, in a separate communication. It was in response to this appeal that the Rev. Alexandar Duff, the pioneer of Educational Missions in India, was sent over by the Church of Scotland in 1830.

Rev Alexander Duff arrived in Calcutta in 1830. The young missionry received a most cordial welcome and valuable help from Raja Rammohun Roy, but for whose timely co-operation he might have had to go back in disappointment. Let us again quote from the biographer of Dr. Duff: "In a pleasant garden house in the leafy suburbs of Calcutta, Raja Rammohun Roy, then fifty-six years of age, was spending his declining days in earnest meditation of divine truth, broken only by works of practical benevolence among his countrymen, and soon by preparations for that visit to England, where in 1833, he yielded to the uncongenial climate. 'You must at once visit the Raja', said General Beatson, when Mr. Duff presented his letter of introduction, 'and I will drive you out on an early evening'. Save by Duff himself afterwards, justice has never been done to this Hindu reformer, this Erasmus of India." So the two remarkable men met, the far-sighted Indian listened to the young Scotchman's statement of his objects and plans and expressed general approval. Contiues the biographer of Dr. Duff:—

"Greatly cheered by the emphatic concurrence of Rammohun Roy Mr. Duff said the real difficulty now was, where or how, to get a hall in the native city; for the natives owing to caste prejudices, were absolutely averse to letting any of their houses to a European for European purposes. Then if a suitable place could be got, how could youths of the respectable classes be induced, since he was resolved to teach the Bible in every class, and he was told this would constitute an insuperable objection. Rammohun Roy at once offered the small hall of the Brahmo Sabha in the Chitpore Road, for which he had been paying to the five Brahmin owners £5 a month of rental......Driving at once to the spot, the generous Hindu reformer secured the Hall for the Christian missionary from Scotland at £4 a month. Pointing to a

punkhah suspended from the roof, Rammohun Roy said with a smile, 'I leave you that as my legacy.'

"After a few days five bright-eyed youths of the higher class, mostly Brahmanical, called upon Mr. Duff at Dr. Brown's where he still resided, with a note of introduction from Rammohun Roy stating that those five, with the full consent of their friends, were ready to attend him whenever he might open the school."

But the troubles did not end here. On the day of the opening of the School, 13th July 1830, as Dr. Duff put a copy of the Bible into the hands of each of the boys, there was murmuring among them, which found voice in the protest of a leader. "This is the Christian *Shastra*. We are not Christians; how then can we read it? It may make us Christians, and our friends will drive us out of caste." Rammohun Roy had thoughtfully anticipated the crisis. And now he presented himself on the occasion. He gently persuaded the boys that there was no harm in reading the Christian *Shastra*. Christians like Dr. Horace Hayman Wilson had read the Hindu *Shastras* but they had not become Hindus. He himself had read the Koran but that had not made him a Mussalman, So the remonstrants were satisfied for the time. Day after day for a month Rammohun Roy would visit the school and frequently thereafter till he left for England. That small school was the pioneer of the splendid Missionary educational institutions which have done so much for the diffusion of education in India.

Rammohun Roy did not rest satisfied with helping others with his counsel and influence. With that entire devotion to purpose and thoroughness in execution which characterised all his efforts, Rammohun at a considerable expense established a school, called the Anglo-Hindu School, for imparting free education in English to Hindu boys. Two teachers were employed, one on a salary of Rs. 150 and the

other of Rs. 70 a month. Nearly the whole of the cost was met by the Raja from his own not superabundant resources. The school flourished for several years and did much good. Maharshi Devendranath Tagore received his early education in this school. One of its special features was the imparting of religious and moral instruction along with secular education, a course on which Rammohun Roy laid great emphasis.

Another great service which Raja Rammohun Roy rendered to the cause of education was the creation of Bengali prose literature. Though primarily affecting Bengal, it has indirectly exercised a highly beneficial influence over the whole country. The intellectual progress of a nation must ultimately depend upon the development of her mother tongue. During the last hundred years there has been a vast and widespread progress in the vernaculars of the country. In Bengal, in this matter as in many others, Raja Rammohun Roy was the pioneer. At the time of his birth Bengali literature did not count for anythiug. There had been some poets, whose extant writings are of considerable poetical merit; but of prose, which is after all the currency of a nation's intellectual life, there was none. There were no religious, philosophical, historical or literary books or essays in Bengali prose. Rammohun Roy was the first to employ Bengali prose in expressing serious thought and making it a powerful medium of popular enlightenment and education. He translated Sanskrit scriptures, conducted religious controversies, wrote articles on moral and social subjects in simple, elegant Bengali prose. He even wrote text books on grammar, geometry, geography and other useful subjects in Bengali. He was also the father of that branch of literature which has become so common and so potent a factor of modern civilisation, *viz*, journalism, in Bengali, As early as 1819 he started a Bengali journal, called the *Samvad Kaumudi*, which was perhaps

the first Bengali journal, and was largely instrumental in bringing about the transformation of thought and life in the province. Thus arose a new Bengali literature, which has steadily grown in volume and power ever since.

Equally important was the Raja's contributions to the revival of Sanskrit study in Bengal. In his time Sanskrit was at a very low ebb in the province. Sanskrit learning was mainly confined to a mechanical cramming in grammar and the *Smritis*, The Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Vedant were almost forgotten. Though an earnest advocate of modern scientific culture, Rammohun Roy was no less ardent in his admiration for and insistunt on the revival of the ancient Aryan culture. At the discussions of the *Atmiya sabha* as to the best means for the elevation of the Indian people, at which David Hare was present, Rammohun Roy seriously contended at first that "they should establish an assembly or convocation in which what are called the higher or purer dogmas of Vedantism or ancient Hinduism might be taught." But later when he came to stand in favour of western scientific education, he did not altogether abandon his plea for the revival of ancient Hindu learning, but persevered single-handed in his scheme and at last in 1826 succeeded in establishing a Vedanta college. He appears to have built a house and spent every month a considerable sum of money for it.

To convince people of the excellence of the ancient Hindu religious literature he, further, published some of the master pieces of the early times with translations in Bengali, English and Hindi. This had of course, the desired effect ; others, following in his footsteps, laboured in this rich field ; and there has grown a lively interest in the study of ancient Hindu religious literature of which Rammohun was the inaugurator. Eminent scholars of the present day have borne testimoney to the value of this phase of the Raja's labours.

Pandit Kalibar Vedantabagish, a well known Vedantic scholar of recent times, observed at a public meeting in commemora- of the 63rd anniversary of the Raja's death that "a great boon had been conferred on the country by Raja Rammohun Roy in reviving the study of Vedanta philosophy in Bengal and acknowledged in feeling terms how he was himself indebted to the Raja for having been first led to the study of the Vedanta by the Raja's writings on the subject in the *Tattwabodhini Patrika.*"

The inestimable blessings which Rammohun Roy conferred on his countrymen by establishing the Brahmo Samaj has somewhat overshadowed the greatness of his services in other spheres. Not only was Raja Rammohun Roy the inaugurator of a new era in the religious history of India, he was equally the Father of the modern political awakening of the country. At the celebration of the death anniversary of the Raja on 27th, September, 1904, The Hon'ble Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee said, in the course of a speech, to be found in the Appendix: "Let it be remembered that Rammohun was not only the Founder of the Brahmo Samaj and the pioneer of all social reform in Bengal, but he was also the Father of constitutional agitation in India." Before the time of Rammohun Roy's public activities in Calcutta there was no glimmering of a political life in the country. People had no conception of their civil rights and privileges ; nobody ever thought of approaching Government to make known their grievances and ask for redress. Raja Rammohun Roy was the first to enunciate the rights and privileges of the people, and in the name of the nation to speak to the Government of their duties and responsibilities as the sovereign power. The first stand made by the people of India in defence of their civil rights was when Raja Rammohun Roy, in his own name and in the name of five of his friends, submitted a memorial to the Supreme Court in Calcutta, on the 31st

March, 1823 against the Ordinance of the then acting Gevernor-General, Mr. Adam, prescribing that thenceforth no one should publish a newspaper or other periodical without having obtained a licence from the Governor-General in Council." The conception as well as the execution of the memorial was Rammohun Roy's own. Miss Collet has justly said of the memorial, "it may be regarded as the Areopagitica of Indian history. Alike in diction and in argument, it forms a noble landmark in the progress of English culture in the East."

Whether for cogent reasoning or for convincing appeal the memorial could hardly he excelled. It would do credit to any statesman of any age. With a broad, liberal, far-sighted statesmanship it enumerates the inestimable blessings of a free press both for the rulers and the ruled. After this Rule and Ordinance shall have been carried into execution, your memorialists are therefore sorry to observe, that a complete stop will be put to the diffusion of knowledge and the consequent mental improvement now going on, either by translations into the popular dialect of this country from the learned languages of the east, or by the circulation of literary intelligence drawn from foreign publications. And the same cause will also prevent those Natives who are better versed in the laws and customs of the British Nation from communicating to their fellow subjects a knowledge of the admirable system of Government established by the British and the peculiar excellencies of the means they have adopted for the strict and impartial administration of justice. Another evil of equal importance in the eyes of a just Ruler is that it will also preclude the natives from making the Government readily acquainted with the errors and injustice that may be committed by its executive officers in the various parts of this extensive country; and it will also preclude the Natives from communicating frankly and honestly, to their Gracious

sovereign in England and his Council, the real condition of His Majesty's faithful subjects in this distant part of his dominions and the treatment they experience from the local Government; since such information cannot in future be conveyed to England, as it has been, either by the translations from the Native publications inserted in the English newspapers printed here and sent to Europe or by the English publications which the Natives themselves had in contemplation to establish, before this Rule and Ordinance was proposed. After this sudden deprivation of one of the most precious of their rights which has been freely allowed them since the establishment of the British power, a right which they are not, cannot be, charged with having ever abused, the inhabitants of Calcutta would be no longer justified in boasting, that they are fortunately placed by Providence under the protection of the whole British nation or that the King of England and his Lords and Commons are their Legislators, and that they are secured in the enjoyments of the same civil and religious privileges that every Briton is entitled to in England."

When this memorial was rejected by the Supreme Court, the Raja prepared a fresh memorial to be submitted to the King. Miss Collet has characterised this latter as "one of the noblest pieces of English to which Rammohun put his hand. Its stately periods and not less stately thought recall the eloquence of the great orators of a century ago. In a language and style for ever associated with the glorious vindication of liberty it invokes against arbitrary exercise of British power the principles and the traditions which are distinctive of British history." It was really a marvellous production, considering the age and the circumstances under which it was written. But it had produced no better results than its predecessor. The Privy Council in November, 1825, after six months' consideration declined to comply with the

petition. As a final protest, Rammohun Roy stopped his weekly Urdu paper, Mirat-ul-Akhbar, declaring his inability to publish it under what he considered degrading conditions.

In 1827 Rammohun Roy made another spirited protest against the illiberal policy of the Government, which reveals his ever wakeful solicitude for the rights of his countrymen as well as his deep political insight. In 1826 a Jury Bill for India was passed, which came into operation in the beginning of 1827. Rammohun Roy prepared and sent up to both Houses of Parliament petitions against it signed by Hindus and Mahommedans. On this occasion the Raja took his stand on the injustice and injudiciousness of making invidious religious distinctions in the administration of a country like India. The circumstances of the case will be clearly understood from the following concise statement in a letter written by Rammohun Roy on the 15th August, 1828 to Mr. J. Crawford: "In his famous Jury Bill, Mr. Wynn, the late President of the Board of Control, has by introducing religious distinctions into the judicial system of this country, not only afforded just grounds for dissatisfaction among the Natives in general, but has excited much alarm in the breast of everyone conversant with political principles. Any Natives either Hindu or Mahommedan, are rendered by this Bill subject to judicial trial by Christians, either European or Native, while Christians including Native converts, are exempted from the degradation of being tried either by a Hindu or Mussalman juror, however high he may stand in the estimation of society. This Bill also denies both to Hindus and Mussalmans the honour of a seat in the Grand Jury, even in the trial of fellow Hindus or Mussalmans. This is the sum total of Mr. Wynn's late Jury Bill of which we bitterly complain." Rammohun Roy supported his contention by referring to the miseries of Ireland arising out of civil discriminations between different religious beliefs. With reference

to this letter, the biographer of the Raja remarks : "There is here in germ the national aspiration which is now breaking forth into cries for representation of India in the Imperial Parliament, 'Home Rule for India' and even 'India for the Indians.' The prospect of an educated India, of an India approximating to European standards of culture, seems to have never been long absent from Rammohun's mind, and he did, however vaguely, claim in advance for his countrymen the political rights which progress in civilisation inevitably involves. Here again Rammohun stands forth as the tribune and prophet of New India."

Indeed, the thoroughness and vigour of the Raja's political efforts were astonishing. Even at that early age he carried his political agitations to the very centre of the seat of authority. His visit to England, fraught as it was with manifold consequences, had a far-reaching effect on the politics of India. One of the main objects which he had in view in going to England was to lay before the British public the cause of India, and in this mission, he was remarkably successful. "Rammohun Roy's presence in this country," says the English biographer of the Raja, "made the English people aware, as they had never been before, of the dignity, the culture and the piety of the race they had conquered in the East. India became incarnate in him, and dwelt among us, and we beheld her glory. In the court of the King, in the halls of the legislature, in the select coteries of fashion, in the society of philosophers and men of letters, in Anglican church and Non-comformist meeting-house, in the privacy of many a home, and before the wondering crowds of Lancashire operatives, Rammohun Roy stood forth the visible and personal embodiment of our eastern empire. Wherever he went, there went a stately refutation of the Anglo-Indian insolence which saw in an Indian fellow subject only a 'black man' or a 'nigger'. As he had interpreted England to

India, so now he interpreted India to England. But it was not merely by his silent presence and personality in England that he advanced the cause of India; but during his three years' stay in that country he worked strenuously and incessantly on her behalf.* He lost no opportunity of pressing the claims of India on those who were responsible for her good Government. He went to England at a very opportune time. The Charter of the East India Company was to be shortly renewed. Rammohun Roy had purposely chosen this time for his European visit that he might influence the authorities in inserting, in the new Charter provisions for the better administration of his country. His hopes were amply realised. He was asked to give his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed in February and reappointed in June 1831 to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter, and he submitted his evidence in writing. His two papers on the Judicial and the Revenue systems of India, which appeard in the blue books and were subsequently reprinted by him, are master-pieces of political information and insight, and might be read with profit even at this day, while they must have largely influenced the decision of the authorities in his time. One cannot but be struck with the accuracy and exhaustiveness of the information and the soundness and breadth of the views of the writer. Among the principal measures he advocated were the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the

* Miss Carpenter writes that during the residence of Rammohun Roy in England "his time and thoughts were continually occupied with the proceedings of the Government, and affording information and advice whenever they were required. Everything else was made subservient to this great object. Frequently was the noble form of the illustrious stranger seen within the precincts of our Houses of Parliament, as those still remember who were there thirty-five years ago."

courts of law, the appointment of native assessors in the civil courts, trial by Jury, separation of the offices of Judge and Revenue Commissioner, of those of Judge and Magistrate, codification of the criminal law and also of the civil law in India, large employment of Indians in the civil service of the country and consultation of public opinion before enacting legislation. It is remarkable that, though himself a Zamindar, Rammohun Roy earnestly pleaded the cause of the agricultural peasants as against the Zamindars. He showed that, though the Zamindars had greatly benefitted by the Permanent Settlement of 1793, the condition of the actual cultivators continued as miserable as ever, the Zamindars being at liberty to enhance the rent constantly. "Such is the melancholy condition of agricultural labourers," he wrote, "that it always gives me the greatest pain to allude to it." The remedy he asked for was, in the first place, the prohibition of any further rise in rent and, in the second, a reduction in the revenue demanded from the Zamindar so as to ensure a reduction in rent. Thus Rammohun was the champion of the people at large and not of the class to which he himself belonged, Many of the reforms advocated by him have already been carried out, and the political leaders of the present day are still working out the programme laid down by him. Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee thus acknowledges in the address already referred to the political foresight of the Raja: "It is remarkable how he anticipated us in some of the great political problems of to-day."

To turn next to the social work of Raja Rammohun Roy. The great reform with which his name will remain associated for ever is the abolition of *Sati.* But for his timely co-operation it is doubtful if the British Government could have suppressed this flagrant evil ; it would certainly have continued for a much longer time. This inhuman custom had prevailed in India for many centuries and a few fitful efforts

under the Hindu and Mahommedan rule to abolish it had ended in failure. At the time when Rammohun Roy turned his attention to this shameful wrong, it was, if anything, steadily on the increase. Though individual kind-hearted officers looked upon the custom with abhorrence, the attitude of the Government itself was that of *laisser faire* ; successive Governors declined to interfere with it for fear of wounding the religious susceptibilities of the people, which might lead to trouble. It was the efforts of Raja Rammohun Roy that made possible the drastic measures so promptly taken. Though there had been some talk and correspondence among the official circles as to their duty, it is evident that, but for the appearance of the great reformer on the scene, no decisive steps would have been taken at least for a long time. Rammohun Roy, by incessant agitation prepared the public mind on the one side and strengthened the hands of the Government on the other. By means of his writings and discussions he created a powerful public opinion in favour of the abolition of the cruel custom. He showed conclusively that the Hindu *Shashtras* did not enjoin the burning of widows along with their husbands, and thus disarmed the objection of interference with the religious rites of the people. He removed all obstacles real or interposed, in the way of Government action. But even then the Government hesitated for a considerable time, and Rammohun Roy had to appeal to them in the name of humanity with all the earnestness of his nature, before they could be persuaded to take the momentous step. Rev. W. J. Fox justly remarked in welcoming the Raja on his arrival in London :—"There is no doubt that it was greatly through his firmness, his enlightened reasonings, and his persevering efforts, that the Government of Bengal at last thought themselves enabled to interdict the immolation of widows. His arguments and his appeals to ancient authorities held sacred by the Brahmins, enlightened

the minds of many of them; and made the merciful interposition of Lord William Bentinck and his Council, no longer regarded by them, and by persons connected with the East India Company at home, as an interference with the religions of the Hindus." It was a great triumph of reason and humanity. A cruel wrong, a barbarous and inhuman atrocity, was blotted out from the face of the Hindu society. The yearly toll of many hundreds of noble, unselfish lives was stopped for ever. But more important than the immediate and visible good that resulted, a great principle was enunciated, a new era in the hoary Hindu society was inaugurated. The abolition of *Sati* marked the secure foundation of the social reform movement in India. For centuries past the Hindu society had been at the mercy of blind tradition and heartless custom. Cruel wrongs, gross injustices, disgraceful superstitions had passed unchallenged from generation to generation. Rammohun Roy dared, for the first time after the lapse of many centuries, to challenge the unquestioned authority of custom and tradition. He enunciated and upheld the dictates of reason, conscience and humanity against prejudice and public opinion and appealed to the intelligent authority of the *shastras* against the blind, slavish submission to tradition, born of ignorance which passed for piety. Rammohun Roy taught the people to realise that everything that had come down from the past was not ideal and that a living society stood in constant need of readjustment to varying circumstances. Thus a new era of conscious, active reform was inaugurated in the Hindu society, of which Raja Rammohun was the leader and pioneer.

It is noteworthy that in his efforts for social reform Raja Rammohun Roy made use of all the three different methods the claims of which have often been placed in mutual antagonism in later times. He utilised every available aid from the *Shastras*; but he had faith as well in the reason, con-

science and common sense of men, and always appealed to the humanity and moral sense of people. His controversial writings, appealing by turns to common sense, conscience and the authority of the *Shastras*, are admirably suited to the purpose of carrying conviction. He also did not hesitate to seek the aid of Government, where necessary and possible, to further his scheme for the improvement of social efficiency. Thus not only was he the pioneer of the social reform movement in modern India, but he also laid down the lines along which the work should be carried on.

Rammohun Roy did not rest satisfied with the mere preaching of reform principles, but boldly proceeded to carry them out in his own life and conduct. His daring visit to Europe was an example of heroic courage and practical reform. He was the first Hindu to cross the ocean. It was really the breaking of a spell, as it has been said, "which for ages the sea had laid on India." We can understand the daring intrepidity of the act from the fact that even after Rammohun Roy had furnished an axample, it was but rarely followed for many subsequent years and even now, there are hundreds who, even after receiving the highest education are still afraid of doing what Rammohun Roy did nearly a century ago. For India it was truly a momentous step—an act of liberation. The English biographer of the Raja does not in the least overestimate the significance of this great enterprise in saying that "the consequences for his countrymen are such as to make this act alone sufficient to secure for its author a lasting distinction."

During the few crowded years of his public life, the Raja set his hand to several items of the social reform programme of the present day. He denounced in scathing terms the many injustices and ill-treatments which women were subjected to in the Hindu society of his day. He deplored the ignorance and the lack of education of women, while indig-

nantly repudiating the insinuations against the intellectual and moral capacities of the gentler sex. He firmly believed that with "proper education and facilities for improvements, women would prove in no way inferior to men." His chivalrous regard for women made him keenly sensitive to their wrongs and miseries. He wrote strongly against polygamy. He pointed out how the Hindu *Shastras* did not permit more than one marriage except under certain specified conditions. It is even said that he advocated the passing of a State Regulation to require a man before marrying a second time to obtain a license from a Magistrate or some other authorised Government officer certifying to such a defect in the existing wife as alone according to the *Shastras* justified a second marrige. The miseries of Hindu widows did not fail to attract the sympathy of his tender heart; but he had no time to do much for them. In an early issue of the *Samvad Kaumudi* (No 6 of 1821) we find a proposal to raise a Fund in aid of helpless Hindu widows. After his departure for England there was a wide-spread rumour that on his return, he would introduce the remarriage of Hindu widows.

Rammohun Roy was opposed to the existing system of caste distinctions in Hindu society. He held that the superiority or inferiority of men depended on their own respective merits and not on the accident of birth. He alone was a Brahmin who knew and was devoted to Brahman. With a view to propagating this spiritual principle of sociology, the Raja began the publication of a Sanskrit treatise by Mrityunjaya Bhattacharya, against the caste system, together with a translation and annotations in Bengali by himself. This work, however, was not completed, only the first chapter being published in 1829. He was keenly alive to the evils of the caste system. Writing to a friend in 1828, he observed: "The distinction of castes introducing innumerable divisions and subdivisions among them has entirely deprived them of

patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise."

Thus it will be noticed that Rammohun Roy's scheme of social reform was exhaustive and thorough-going, though with his unfailing, practical wisdom he concentrated his attention on the more urgent problems then before him. With the passion of the reformer for justice and humanity he combined the practical wisdom of the statesman, which made him the most successful reformer of modern India.

But the greatest work of Rammohun Roy was undoubtedly in the field of religion. Here he stands forth not only as a reformer of Hinduism but as the bearer of a message and mission for all humanity. The cardinal principle of his religious faith was—One God, Father of all, and spiritual worship. Early in life there dawned on his mind the light of a universal religion which knew no distinction of race or colour, country or nationality, as a bar to men of all types and traditions standing on the basis of their common humanity and worshipping their common Father in spirit and in truth. This early faith, after the tests and trials of his entire, eventful career, after searching criticism at the hands of numerous adversaries from various standpoints and after mature deliberation on his own part, found expression in the memorable trust deed of the Brahmo Samaj, the place of worship which he established for the exercise of universal spiritual religion. It was dedicated to the "worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Being, who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe, but not under, or by any other name, designation or title, peculiarly used for and applied to, any particular being or beings, by any man or set of men whatsoever, and that no graven image, statue or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait or likeness of any thing shall be admitted within the messuage,

building, land, tenements, hereditaments and premises ; and that no sacrifice, offering or oblation of any kind or thing shall ever be permitted therein." The Trust-deed directed that the place should be available as a place of "public meeting of all sorts and descriptions of people, without distinction, as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious and devout manner." Thus he stands forth as one of the earliest exponents, if not the very earliest, of the modern liberal religious movement, which recognises the working of the spirit of God in all religions and finds His revelation in the scriptures of all races. While the religious world was yet sharply divided between the Hindu and the Mlechha, the Christian and the Heathen, the Moslem and the Kafir, while even the advanced religious thinkers of the west, with all the advantages of rapidly expanding scientific knowledge and culture, were still unable to rise above sectarian narrowness and the inheritance of tribal, ethnic or national conceptions of God and religion, this wonderful Indian, without any opportunities for culture, any enlightened public sentiment for support, realised a conception of universal religion, which transcended all barriers of clime and colour, creed and custom. The religious thinkers of Europe and America were still busy with the problems of verbal inspiration, validity of miracles and such other questions ; their vision did not yet stretch beyond the confines, of the Bible and Christendom. But on Rammohun Roy there already dawned so early the full-orbed glory of one God, one humanity and one ever-progressive revelation. Before the first quarter of the nineteenth century was over, we find him speaking with profound veneration of the Vedanta and the Bible and the Quoran. It is no wonder that his contemporaries failed to understand him, and that even to this day the Hindus claim him to have been a Hindu, the Christians, a Christian and the Mahommedans a *Zabardust*

Moulvi. Even an enlightened and open-minded disciple and co-worker like the Rev. Mr. Adam was puzzled over the enigma of this great mind. It is interesting and amusing to find Mr. Adam, towards the close of his association with Rammohun Roy, making the following confession to a common friend, Dr. Tuckerman: "Rammohun Roy, I am persuaded, supports this institution, not because he believes in the divine authority of the Ved, but solely as an instrument for overthrowing idolatry. To be candid, however, I must add that the conviction has lately gained ground in my mind that he employs Unitarian Christianity, in the same way, as an instrument for spreading pure and just notions of God, without believing in the divine authority of the Gospel."

The facts were as stated by Mr. Adam; only the insinuation contained in the passage is groundless. There was no inconsistency or unworthy policy in the position of Rammohun Roy. His catholic mind rose to a height where the narrow limits of sectarianism ceased to exist for him. He was accordingly described by Mr. Adam in a letter to another friend as "both a Christian and a Hindu"—a description which Rammohun Roy himself approved of as a true picture of his religious attitude. The truth is, as his English biographer says of him in another connection, that the "Raja was no merely occidentalized oriental, no Hindu polished into the doubtful semblance of a European. Just as little was he, if we may use the term without offence, a spiritual Eurasian. If we follow the right line of his development we shall find that he leads the way from the Orientalism of past, not to, but through Western, culture, towards a civilization which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both." Similarly, it might be said of him that he was neither entirely a Hindu nor exclusively a Christian but something larger and nobler than both.

He led the way from the Hinduism of the past, not to, but through Christianity, into the Universal Church of spiritual Theism, which embraced all that was precious and inspiring in Hinduism as well as in Christianity. His religious position was, we believe, correctly and very aptly summed up in the words of the memorial tablet over his tomb at Bristol, "a conscientious and steadfast believer in unity of the God-head who consecrated his life with entire devotion to the worship of the Divine Spirit alone." It was not a mere philosophical opinion, but a living faith, which he hoped and believed was to be the religion of humanity. It was not even eclecticism, stringing together passages and sayings from different scriptures; but in his own soul Rammohun Roy saw the vision of a living faith, which, with his growing acquaintance with the religious literature of the world, he found hidden in all religions under the crust of ages. He realised that true Hinduism as much as true Christianity or true Mahommedanism, was not far away from his own inmost faith. It was this liberalism of fellowship that the followers of sectarian religions naturally misjudged in him, but that really led him not to object to being called a Hindu or a Christian. He saw with the prophet's eye that a time would come when the boundaries of creed and scripture and prophet would merge, if not melt away, and men of all races, the east and west, north and south, would sit together in adoration at the feet of "the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable God". The foundation of this liberal universal religion, and catholic worship, fitly marked the crowning act of his eventful life. He was hardly understood at the time, even by his followers. But to-day the ideal of Rammohun Roy has spread and is making rapid progress throughout the civilised world. Churches and sects are unmistakably moving towards the position which Rammohun Roy occupied in solitary grandeur a century ago.

To India his mission has proved to be of the most far-reaching consequences. It has laid the axe at the root of the evil growth of centuries. With the unerring precision of the prophet under the sure guidance of a divine dispensation, Rammohun Roy laid the foundation of a living spiritual faith and formed the nucleus of a progressive catholic Church, which, in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties, has spread to every part of this vast land and made its way among almost all the races and communities that comprise its immense population. The Brahmo Samaj, which is the concrete embodiment of his religious and social ideal, has thoroughly discarded idol worship, and the fetters of caste and priestcraft, the bondage of infallible guru and book, which for centuries domineered oppressively over the spirit of the nation and defied successfully all endeavours at reformation. In a country divided and sub-divided into innumerable castes and sub-castes, sects and sub-sects and among whom there was not the commonest amenities of fellowship, it has already united men of all castes and creeds language and nationalities, —Hindus, Mahommedans and Christians, Bengalis, Marhattas Parsees and Telugus, Indians and Europeans into a close spiritual and social brotherhood.

It has given to the world a pure, spiritual religion not fettered by a narrow creed or confession, not confined in blind, exclusive allegiance to one particular book or prophet, but free and progressive, wedded to truth and righteousness from whatsoever source they come, owning the scriptures and prophets of all ages and countries as its own so far as they prove helpful and stimulating to the higher life.

It has brought a message of deliverane to the submerged millions of India and extended equal intellectual and spiritual fellowship to womankind, who for ages have been cut off from light and culture and doomed to a narrow, ignoble life

under many cruel wrongs and injustices. While the Brahmo Samaj has thus formed an advanced community with a lofty domestic and social ideal, numerically not yet very large, it has also profoundly affected the mass of the people, who are being rapidly leavened with the new ideals. Rammohun's spiritual influence is not confined to the Brahmo Samaj alone; he is verily the spiritual Father, the *Guru* of New India.

Leaving alone the work, if we look at the man, we find all testimonies agree in giving the impression of a personality of extraordinary influence. In whatever society he moved he evoked warm and enthusiastic admiration. Mr. Adam, with his several years' intimate knowledge of him wrote: "I was never more thoroughly, deeply and constantly impressed than when in the presence of Rammohun Roy and in friendly and confidential converse with him, that I was in the presence of a man of natural and inherent genius, of powerful understanding and of a determined will, a will determined with singular energy and uncontrollable self-direction, lofty and generous purposes." The Rev. W. J. Fox, after an association with the Raja for only two years, said of him in the course of a memorial sermon after his death: "We shall see his face no more! His presence has passed away as a poetic image fades from the brain! But it has left impressions which will long endure; influences of good, wide and deep here, yet wider and deeper in the distant land of his nativity. And being dead, he yet speaketh with a voice to which not only India but Europe and America will listen for generations." An English correspondent of Dr. Channing, Miss Lucy Aikin, who came in frequent contact with the Raja, wrote of him to the American religious reformer: "He is indeed a glorious being,—a true sage, as it appears, with the genuine humility of the character, and with more fervour, more sensibility, a more engaging tenderness of heart than any *class* of character can justly claim." An American physician of London, Dr.

Boot, wrote of the Raja in a letter* to Mr. Estlin: "To me he stood alone in the single majesty of, I had almost said,

---

* The letter is so interesting that it is worth reproduction in its entirety. It is as follows :—

24, Gower Street, Bedford Square,
27th November 1833.

My dear Sir,—Your kind, most kind, letter of yesterday, has this moment reached me, and I have shed tears over it, at the fresh recollection of the sorrow that has thrown a deep shadow over the future hopes and happiness of my life. I feel most sincere gratitude to you for your valuable services, and your devotion and tenderness over the sick bed of our late beloved friend. God knows I have deeply sympathised with you in the painful responsibility of your situation and I can well assure that everything which the soundest medical judgment and the deepest solicitude could suggest was done. In the feelings of all around me here, who dearly loved him, you and Dr. Prichard are spoken of with sincere and grateful respect, and the blessing of a just man made perfect now rests upon you.

Your account of the change in your feelings towards the Raja, from the influence of the reports that had reached you, has very deeply affected me, for knowing the Rajah so well, it is the most striking evidence of the force of the human prejudice that I have hitherto met with,—I mean on the part of those who misrepresented him to you ; for your yielding to those representations arose from the same sensibility that led you first to admire him in his works. I thank God that you had an opportunity of tearing yourself the veil from your eyes, and that the primitive love and admiration you cherished for him was confirmed by your personal intercourse with him : confirmed to be rendered immutable by the seal of Death !

To me he stood alone in the single majesty of, I had almost said perfect humanity. No one in past history or in the present time ever came before my judgment clothed in such wisdom, grace and humility. I knew of no tendency even to error. To say he was not the disciple of Christ, that he even smiled in approbation of infidelity, and joined those thoughtless and weak and ignorant men who set themselves up against the testimonies of the human heart, which asserts the truth of religion against the wit and follies of the vainest and the cleverest head, is to belie his whole life. I have often talked with him on religious subjects,

perfect humanity. No one in past history, or in present time ever came before my judgment clothed in such wisdom, grace

and have seen him among sceptics. He was never more free and unembarrassed and cheerful than when arguing with those who had a logical and acute mind. He often told me that he always introduced the subject when he met the historian of India, and that his object in the argument was to show the insufficiency of human reason for the production of the highest moral worth, and the highest happiness. He even contended that 'the spirit that was in Christ Jesus and unknown and unrevealed till his mission, directed the human mind to more elevated purer and more disinterested thoughts, motives and actions, than the noblest philosophy of antiquity did or could do; that the Christian precepts left nothing to desire or to hope for through futurity; that as a system of morality, it was alone able to lead to purity and happiness here and to form the mind for any conceivable state of advancement hereafter. He often beautifully said, 'I can never hope in my day to find mankind of one faith, and it is my duty to exercise the charities of life with all men.' He did not go about with the spirit of proselytism. He argued only for the sense of religious obligation, and emphatically assured us that all his experience of life had exhibited to him virtue and self-respect and happiness in its true elements, even in proportion to the intensity of that sense. He was the humblest of human beings, and ardent as he was in the faith of his selection he was sensibly disturbed if religion was spoken lightly of, or argued but reverentially before woman. He would often smile and speak jocosely when the turn of the discussion made him uneasy from his sensibilities towards woman being awakened; and those who knew him, saw by his manner and looks that he adopted this lightness of manner in hopes that the subject would be dropped.

I was once in his presence where a father was expressing doubts of Christianity before two of his daughters, who were near forty and before three other ladies. He expressed himself most forcibly in defence of the immutable truth of religion, and when the conversation was resumed by the sceptic, he touched lightly and with levity on the diction and expressions of the other, and often in the intervals sat as if he were abstracted and unconcerned in what was said; and when appealed to, he in the same careless manner criticised the language of his opponent, without touching the sense. A lady whom he loved sat by me, and said

and humanity. I knew of no tendency even to error.*** He was the most liberal, the most amiable, the most candid of

in an under tone to me: 'The Raja appears to smile at everything.' I replied, 'Your woids import more than you mean, and you mistake his present feelings; he is visibly distressed, and wishes the subject to be dropped. She observed him closely and said I was right, as he took an early opportunity of calling his attention to something else. He soon after left the party. I had an engagement with him the next morning, and the first subject he spoke of was the conversation of the night before, and he expressed himself highly offended that a father should, before his own daughters, confess his infidelity, and so far forget himself as to say anything to shake the faith of a female. He added, 'it is more painful to me to argue with sceptics before women, for there is no hope of its leading to good, and there must be pain where it is our duty to give pleasure always; I never permitted religion to be discussed before my daughters or wife.' I can only say that at every visit my admiration of him grew with my intimacy with his mind and actions. He was the most liberal, the most amiable, the most candid of men. His generosity was unbounded; his most touching politeness was an instinct of his nature; it never left him to his most familiar associates; while he paid just deference to rank in obedience to the conventional etiquette of society, he honoured above all men the poor gardener whom he met with in some rich establishment in India, who had, uninfluenced by the authority of his superiors, examined the scriptures, and adopted the faith of the unity of God. He went to the garden every day to talk with him; he often said to us 'I could have taken him in my arms as a brother. I called with him on Dr. Tuckerman, Mr. Deway, and Mr. Phillips of America, and when he had shaken hands with them he said, with his countenance lighted up with emotion, 'I am so happy to be with Unitarians.' He did not mix in the sect as some expected, and reflections were often passed upon him. Mr. Fox has touched this with admirable force in his sermon. The object of the Raja was to mix with and know all sects. One of his greatest desires was to see Catholicism in Rome. He admired the obedience to duties in the Catholics and always spoke of them in this light with admiration. Whatever faults were mixed with their faith, he recognised in their attention to the poor and sick, the noblest spirit of Christianity. One of the last arguments I heard from him was his defence of them, against one who urged

men. His generosity was unbounded, his most touching politeness was an instinct of his nature, it never left him to his most familiar associates."

Such high estimates bordering almost on extravagance, were not in the least exaggerated. The character of Rammohun Roy with the noblest qualities of the intellect, heart and soul harmoniously developed was really a picture of perfect symmetry. In the combination of intellectual greatness with breadth of sympathy and nobleness of soul, it was an example of almost as complete a humanity as has ever been seen in the history of our race. Even the outward features were proportionate to the grandeur of the mind within, as will be seen from the following sketch, which appeared in the Court Journal of London for Oct. 5. 1833, just a week after his death. "The Raja in the outer man, was cast in nature's finest mould : his figure was manly and robust, his carriage

their acting under artificial stimulus. He contended that what they did was enforced on all, by the very example of Christ; and that the stimulus was their faith in the force and truth of that example.

But I must stop. When I think that I shall see him no more ; that the beauty of his countenance, the picturesqueness of his eastern costume, the kind reception, the noble example of virtues never felt, at least so powerfully, in others, the hope I had entertained of his future usefulness, the certainty I had of his present happiness, and all his enlarged affections,—when I think that these have passed away forever of my brief existence, I feel a sorrow such as I never felt before, and one which can only find consolation in that pure religion of which he was so able a defender. His loss has given tenfold value in my mind to his writings, and I have studied them with a subdued feeling since his death, and risen from their perusal with a more confirmed conviction of his having been unequalled in past or present time. Peace to his sacred memory !

Present my best respects to Miss Acland and Dr. Carpenter, and believe me.

My dear Sir,
Sincerly and gratefully yours
T. BOOT.

dignified : the forehead towering, expansive and commanding : the eye dark, restless, full of brightness and animation, yet liquid and benevolent and frequently glistening with a tear when affected by the deeper sensibility of the heart ; the nose of Roman form and proportions ; lips full and indicative of independence ; the whole features deeply expressive, with a smile of soft and peculiar fascination and which won irresistibly the suffrages to whom it was addressed."*

Dr. Carpenter quoted the following description of the Raja's personal appearance from the Asiatic Journal : "The person of Rammohun Roy was a very fine one. He was nearly six feet high ; his limbs were robust and well proportioned, though latterly, either through age or increase of bulk he appeared rather unwieldy and inactive. His face was beautiful ; the features large and manly, the forehead lofty and expanded, the eyes dark and animated, the nose finely curved and of due proportion, the lips full and the general expression of the countenance that of intelligence and benignity."

The intellectual powers of Rammohun Roy were admittedly of an extraordinary type. The inscription on his tomb at Bristol puts the matter modestly when it says, "To great natural talents he united a thorough mastery of many languages and early distinguished himself as one of the greatest

* This description is in complete agreement with that by Dr. Carpenter, and with the portrait now in the Bristol Museum, painted by Briggs R. A,. which was pronounced by Dr. Carpenter as the best portrait extant. "It gives, indeed, the impression of a less bulky person than the Raja's was, in at least the latter part of life ; and the mouth does not satisfy me in its form or its expression, but the rest of the countenance, the attitude of the figure, and the hands—beautifully significant as well as masterly painted give that expression to the whole which those who contemplate Rammohun Roy as the Hindu sage and reformer would most desire."

scholars of his day." The intellectual eminence of the man was in evidence before he passed out of boyhood; at the early age of sixteen, he composed a book against idol-worship, which appeared to his father formidable. In mature life, the great powers of his intellect stamped themselves on everything to which he put his hand; whoever came into contact with him felt the impress of a superior mind.

One manifestation of the rare intellectual powers of Rammohun Roy was in his marvellous mastery over many different langunges. His knowledge of Sanskrit literature in its various branches was profound. In Arabic and Persian he was thoroughly at home, which got him the title of *Zabardust Moulvie.* At an advanced age he commenced the study of Hebrew and Greek and acquired a perfect mastery over these two different languages, so much so that his English biographer says with perfect justice: "The acquaintance which he shows with Hebrew and Greek and with expository literature is, considering his antecedents, little less than marvellous."

His command over the English language was a marvel to all who knew him. It was not until he was twenty-two that he began to learn English; but within a short time he came to wield a beautiful style of writing, which was the envy of many English men of letters. In a letter to the Raja, Jeremy Bentham, the celebrated philosopher wrote: "Your works are made known to me by a book, in which I read a style which but for the name of a Hindu, I should certainly have ascribed to the pen of a superiorly educated and instructed Englishman." In the same letter while praising the great work of James Mill on the History of India, he makes the remark, "though as to style I wish I could with truth and sincerity pronounce it equal to yours."*

As a theologian, Rammohun Roy was incomparable in his

* Vide Bowring's *Works of Bentham*, vol. x., p. 586.

day. He was equally at home in Hindu, Christian and Mahommedan theology; and he could and did, single-handed, hold his own against Hindu Pandits, Christian Missionaries and Mahommedan Moulavies in religious discussions. Rammohun Roy has justly been called the greatest intellect of our country since Sankaracharya. The biographer of Dr. Duff calls him the Erasmus of India.

His vast learning and subtle powers of debate made him a most formidable controversialist. The editor of the *Indian Gazette*, in reviewing his Final Appeal to the Christian Public, spoke of the Raja as "a most gigantic combatant in the theological field—a combatant who, we are constrained to say, has not met with his match here." One Mr. Anderson of the firm of Colvin & Co. of Calcutta, once said that at his house conferences used to take place frequently between Rammohun Roy and learned European gentlemen of the time, and he heard the latter invariably saying at the close of the discussions, "we will think over the matter." One admirable feature of Rammohun Roy was that he never lost his temper in controversy.

Rammohun Roy had a very quick and at the same time, tenacious memory. Once a Pandit came to the Raja to wrangle on a certain Tantra. Rammohun Roy had never read the book. So he fixed an hour the following day for the discussion. After the Pandit had left, he procured a copy of the Tantra from the library of Sobha Bazar Raja and applied himself to it. Next day the Pandit came at the appointed hour and there was a hard discussion; the points raised by his opponent were answered by the Raja to the satisfaction of all, and the Pandit went away discomfitted.

His application and powers of concentration of mind were equally great. While at Radhanagar, one morning after the bath, he entered his study and began to read the Ramayana of Valmiki, which he had not read before. He had asked

people not to disturb him. The hour of dinner was over, yet none dared to approach him. When the ninth hour was past his mother asked an old gentleman to go to him in his study. As the latter peeped in, the Raja made a sign requesting to be excused a little longer. It is said that he finished the whole of the Ramayana at that one sitting.

Rammohun Roy kept up his studious habits to the last. Mr. Sutherland, a fellow-passenger with the Raja on his voyage to Europe, tells us that "on board the ship during the greater part of the day he read, chiefly Sanskrit and Hebrew."

Great as the Raja was in intellect, he excelled still more in the virtues of the heart. His sympathy extended to the furthest corners of the earth, while he had a most tender feeling for those near to him. He was a model of domestic virtues. Though not himself very fortunate in domestic life, he treated all his relations with a regard and affection undisturbed by their conduct. In spite of his parents' uncommonly harsh dealing with him, he always proved a loving and dutiful son. Of his mother Dr. Carpenter says: "Through the influence of superstitious bigotry, she had been among his most bitter opponents. He, however, manifested a warm and affectionate attachment towards her; and it was with a glistening eye that he told us she had 'repented' of her conduct towards him. Though convinced that his doctrines were true, she could not throw off the shackles of idolatrous customs." "Rammohun" she said to him before she set out on her last pilgrimage to Juggernath, where she died, 'you are right; but I am a weak woman, and am grown too old to give up those observances which are a comfort to me." The Raja was likewise a most generous and loving friend. To servants and inferiors he was always extremely kind and courteous.

His sympathies were wide as the world. Everything

that tended to the good of his fellow being warmly appealed to his loving nature. The sufferings of his countrymen were a heavy load on his heart. It was this that led him to scorn delights and live laborious days. In England, while at Church, he was often found to shed tears, though there was nothing in the sermon to occasion it. Once a friend asked him what made him weep. The Raja replied that the remembrance of his poor countrymen gave him no rest. The miseries of Indian women made a deep impression on his tender heart at an early age; and throughout his life he laboured hard and incessantly to improve their lot; as witness his efforts for the abolition of *Sati*, his exposure of the evils of polygamy and Kulinism, his protest against the modern encroachments on women's rights in the property of parents and husbands. In fact, the cause of women seemed to appeal to him in a special manner. Even European ladies were struck by his deference to and sympathy for women. Miss Lucy Aikin in a letter to Dr. Channing soon after the death of the Raja (Dated Hampstead, October, 23, 1833) wrote of him: "Scarcely any description can do justice to his admirable qualities, and the charms of his society, his extended knowledge, his comprehension of mind, his universal philanthropy, his tender humanity, his genuine dignity mixed with perfect courtesy, and the most touching humility. His memory I shall cherish with affectionate reverence on many accounts, but the character in which I best love to contemplate him is that of the friend and champion of woman. It is impossible to forget his righteous zeal against polygamy, his warm approval of the freedom allowed to women in Europe, his joy and pious gratitude for the abolition of *suttee*. Considering the prejudices of birth and education with which he had to contend, his constant advocacy of the rights and interests of the weaker sex seems to me the very strongest proof of his moral and intellectual greatness."

The fact is every form of injustice and tyranny excited strong, righteous indignation in him, and to all worthy, struggling causes he gave his whole-hearted sympathy and support. Whether it was the fight for constitutional government in Spain, the struggle of the Italians for emancipation from the Austrian yoke, the agitation for good government of Ireland, the conflict over the abolition of slavery in America, or the movement for the amelioration of the condition of Indian women, Rammohun Roy's sympathy poured in unstinted measures on the side of justice and humanity. Distance of space and differences of language and nationality seemed to produce no deterring influence on his great mind. When the intelligence reached India that the people of Naples, after extorting a constitution from their despotic King, were crushed back into servitude by the Austrian troops in obedience to the joint mandate of the crowned heads of Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sardinia and Naples, Rammohun Roy wrote to Mr. Buckingham, begging to be excused from an important engagement, as he was much "depressed by the late news from Europe". "From the late unhappy news," he goes on to add, "I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, specially those that are European colonies, possessed of a greater degree of the same blessing than what they now enjoy. Under these circumstances I consider the cause of the Neapolitans as my own, and their enemies as ours. Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been, and never will be, ultimately successful."

Love of freedom was the passion of his soul. He exulted in the triumph of liberty in any quarter of the globe. The story is told by Miss Collet how at Cape Colony on his way to England, the sight of the tricolour flag on two French ships lying at anchor in Table Bay fired

his enthusiasm. Lame as he then was, owing to a serious fall from the gangway ladder, he insisted on visiting them. The sight of the republican flag seemed to render him insensible to pain. When the news of the three days' revolution at Paris in July, 1830 reached Calcutta, his enthusiasm was so great that "he could think or talk of nothing else." And we are told that, when the news of the establishment of a constitutional government in Spain was received in India, Rammohun Roy gave a public dinner in Calcutta. His feelings about the British Reform Bill of 1832 are well known. He had publicly avowed that, in the event of the Bill being defeated, he would renounce his connection with England for all subsequent times. When the Bill was passing through its concluding stages in the House of Lords, his excitement was so great that he could not even write to his friends.

His cosmopolitan sympathies were so genuine and earnest, that whoever came into contact with him imbibed them insensibly. He seemed to move in a lofty atmosphere of large humanity and world-wide sympathy. Miss Aikin, writing under date, September 6th, 1831, says: "Just now my feelings are more cosmopolitan than usual; I take a personal concern in a third quarter of the globe, since I have seen the excellent Rammohun Roy."

Rammohun's will-power was, likewise, of an extraordinary character. His was a will determined, as Mr. Adam tells us, with singular energy and uncontrollable self direction to lofty and generous purposes. He seemed to feel, to think, to speak, to act as if he could not but do all this, and that he must and could do it only *from* and *through* himself, and that the application of any external influence distinct from his own strong will would be the annihilation of his being and identity. He would be free or not be at all......Love of freedom was perhaps the strongest passion of his soul,—freedom

not of action merely, but of thought. No external pressure could deflect him an inch from the course he had chalked out for himself, no obstacles, however serious, daunted him. Dr. Carpenter once wrote; "It always seemed to me that his was a mind which, while looking to a higher guidance, was to shape its own course." His great mind moved straight to its appointed goal or end undeterred by frown or favour, impediments or incoveniences. Failure never discouraged him, fear never overtook his stout heart.

This strength of will and independence of mind had been in evidence even in the boy, as when, for his anti-idolatrous attitude the lad of sixteen was turned out of the ancestral home, to wander without friend or fortune over the country and even beyond its borders, then so full of unspeakable dangers. Nor did he return home, until called back when the natural, parental love had asserted itself over the religious bigotry of his father. This was a feat which would alone suffice to mark him out as an extraordinary man—*enfante terrible.*

The same love of independence dictated his stipulations with Mr. William Digby when accepting Government service under him. Evidently he had been known to Mr. Digby for sometime, and the latter would appear to have been attracted towards him and possibly himself offered the appointment. Rammohun Roy was in need of some employment; owing to the strained relations with his family, he was to earn his own livelihood. But even then his self-respect would not allow him to submit to the degrading ways of the civilians of those days. He made an express condition that Mr. Digby in his intercourse should uniformly treat him as a gentleman,—a condition which, be it recorded to the honour of that worthy Englishman, was always scrupulously observed. Again, from a more exalted personage than Mr. Digby Rammohun Roy did not flinch from

exacting the same deference. It is said that Lord William Bentick, the then Governor-General, once had occasion to consult him on some important matter and so sent over one of his *aides-de-camp* for him. To this messenger from the Governor-General Rammohun Roy made answer, "I have now given up all worldly avocations, and am engaged in religious culture and in the investigation of truth. Kindly express my humble respects to the Governor-General and inform him that I have no inclination to appear before his august presence, and therefore I hope that he will pardon me." The *aide-de-camp*, wondering at the audacity of the man, reported the matter to Lord Bentick, who enquired what he had said to Rammohun Roy. The *aide-de-camp* replied. "I told him that Lord Wiliam Bentick, the Governor-General, would he pleased to see him." The Governor-General answered, "Go back and tell him again that Mr. William Bentick will be highly obliged if he will kindly see him once." This done, Rammohun Roy visited the Governor-General, whose relations with him ever afterwards continued as respectful as they were cordial.

It is, too, this refined sense of self-respect that explains the remarkable outburst of feeling at the overtures of Bishop Middleton, who held out prospects of honour and advancement in case Rammohun Roy should embrace Christianity. The whole story is narrated in details by Miss Collet on the authority of Mr. Adam; and it need not be repeated here.

Yet Rammohun Roy was one of the most modest and considerate of men that ever lived. This "tenacity of personal independence, this sensitive jealousy of the slightest approach to encroachment on his mental freedom was," Mr. Adam is careful to add, "accompanied with a very nice perception of the equal rights of others, even of those who differed most widely from him." To high and low, and to the

low even more than to the high, he was by nature and on principle always courteous with religious scrupulousness. Mrs. Davison, the wife of a minister in London, to one of whose children the Raja was godfather, wrote of him, "for surely never was there a man of so much modesty and humility! I used to feel quite ashamed of the reverential manner in which he behaved with me. Had I been our queen, I could not have been approached and taken leave of with more respect."

It was finally his strength of will, combined with his faith in God, that carried him through the innumerable difficulties on his path amidst the determined opposition of the Hindus and Christian missionaries alike; the more unscrupulous of his adversaries even went the length of attempting his life. He had to walk in the streets of Calcutta armed with swords and revolvers. For some time he was compelled to go to and come back from the Brahma Mandir with the windows of his carriage shut for fear of being stoned. But single-handed, he stood firm against all violence as against all seductions. He was not the man to be seduced from his God-ordained work by any underhand or unfair means. When the Baptist Missionaries declined to print in their press his reply to their attacks, hoping thereby to silence him, as there was no other press then in Calcutta, Rammohun forthwith set up a press of his own at a considerable cost and trouble to himself, and brought out the "Final Appeal to the Christian Public." Though a small thing, this circumstance is a characteristic indication of the energy and determination of Rammohun Roy. One is also struck with the unbounded faith and perseverance of the man. It is remarkable how, though his repeated memorials to Government had been set aside with scant courtesy, he still went on urging on the authorities here and in England the needs and grievances of his countrymen. Everything

leaves the impression of a man of indomitable will and unconquerable tenacity of purpose.

At the same time the Raja was the most gentle and unassuming of men. In matters which did not involve the surrender of principle he was always yielding and conciliatory. People frequently took advantage of his goodness; and though he was well aware of it, he would not mind it. Miss Carpenter, who speaks from personal knowledge, says: "The extraordinary courteousness and suavity of his general demeanour, and his habitual care to avoid giving unnecessary pain, would have made those who enjoyed his society think of him only as a most delightful and intellectual companion, did not some observation incidentally reveal what were the ever present subjects of his thoughts." The Rev. Mr. Fox in the memorial sermon preached after the Raja's death said: "In social intercourse he endeared himself to natives of many countries and to persons of all parties, ranks and ages; attracting a regard which no celebrity could have conciliated but which flowed spontaneonsly toward that goodness which in him was the soul of greatness." This giant in intellect and energy of will was simple as a child in private and social dealings.

Lastly, as to the religious depth and fervour of this man of God. The extraordinary intellectual powers and uncommon energy of will of Rammohun Roy have somewhat overshadowed his no less remarkable depth of devotion. There are people who, dazzled by his intellectual eminence and public activities, fail to recognise his spiritual greatness; yet religion was the under-current, "the master-bias," of his many-sided genius. His English biographer says with true insight, "He was above all and beneath all a religious personality. The many and far-reaching ramifications of his prolific energy were forth-puttings of one purpose. The root of his life was religion. He would never have been able

to go so far or to move his countrymen so mightily as he did but for the driving power of an intense theistic passion." The worship of the one True God was the mission of his life and the delight of his soul. To establish the spiritual worship of the Spirit-God, the Father of all mankind, was the supreme concern of his life. Wherever he went he first strove to win a band of fellow-worshippers. Long before the foundation of the Brahmo Samaj and while he was yet in the service of the East India Company at Rungpur, we find him bringing together, with great difficulty, a few kindred susceptible souls for joint religious exercises. As soon as he arrived in Calcutta, he formed the Atmiya Sabha, the chief object of which was spiritual worship, and later on he organised the Unitarian Committee for purely theistic worship. Prior to this he constantly attended the Scotch Presbyterian services at St. Andrew's Church, Calcutta, though he did not fully agree with their religious views; so strong was his hankering for religious worship. Rammohun Roy's cook who had accompanied him to England and had opportunities of knowing him intimately, said that "worship of God was Rammohun Roy's first daily work." Miss Hare, who was a constant companion of the Raja during his residence in England, noticed that, often, even while driving in the streets, he would close his eyes and offer up silent prayers to God.

He longed for daily domestic service; but alas, this hankering remained unsatisfied. Soon after his arrival in Calcutta he went to visit the Baptist missionaries of Serampore and stayed for the family prayer in the house of Rev. Mr. Carey, with which, says one of the missionaries, "he was delighted". Mr. Carey presented him with a copy of Dr. Watt's 'Hymns'. The Raja promised he would treasure up the hymns in his heart; and so he did, carrying the book with him to the last days of his life. It has been stated on

the authority of an associate of the Raja, that "Whenever he spoke of universal religion he was so much moved that tears came out from his eyes." People generally think of Rammohun Roy as an intellectual giant, a great theologian and reformer, but he was not more intellectual than devout and emotional. His love for Hafiz and Saadi witnesses to the emotional side of his religion. He was far from an abstract theologian; he was not a mere dry Vedantist; but in him there was a happy harmony of *Jnana*, *Bhakti*, and *Karma*, the intellectual, emotional and practical aspects of religion. His many-sided activities were the outcome of his inner spiritual life. To him, as he used to say constantly, the service of man was the highest expression and fruition of worship.

Such was the great personality, who heralded the dawn of a new ern in India at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Miss Collet has laid us under a deep debt of gratitude by recording the story of this great and eventful life, which we are sure will be read by successive generations of India with joy and enthusiasm.

CONTINUATOR'S NOTE

"I am dying. I cannot finish my 'Life of Rammohun Roy.' But when I enter the Unseen, I want to be able to tell Rammohun that his Life will be finished. Will you finish it for me?" Such was Miss Collet's message. It was sent to one whom she had never so much as seen, who had taken no part in the movemeuts which she had most at heart, and who had only the vaguest knowledge of her hero. The work was not at all along the line of his main pursuits. But to a request of this kind, utterred on the threshold of the eternal world, he felt there could be only one answer. It came to him as a mandate which he could not disobey,—a mandate none the less imperative because wholly unexpected and unprepared for.

In undertaking the task he has endeavoured simply to complete the author's work. Of the immense mass of material which he used, almost all had been collected by her during long and laborious years of patient research: there was scarcely a source he drew from, which she had not indicated. Her general impression of Rammohun's character he has verified and followed. He has adhered to her method of spelling Indian names, excepting in quotations of titles and passages from other works, where he has reproduced the spelling, however arbitrary or inconsistent, of his sources. Being himself no expert in Indian affairs, he gladly acknowledges the technical aid he has received from Miss E. A. Manning, Mr. N. Gupta and Mr. Ananda Mohun Bose. But the work in conception, outline, materials and in all but concluding literary execution is and remains Miss Collet's.

The author died on the 27th March, 1894, The continuator regrets that the work has not appeared sooner. The delay has been occasioned, first by the interposition of obstacles for which he was not responsible, and next by the exigencies of other and more inexorable duties. His part has had to be done in snatches of leisure that were very rare and very brief.

What is it to me, then, that no eye that meets mine
Shines with a kindred light? that should I speak
That which burns in me, O, no tongue so strange
As my unfeigned utterance; that my acts even,
Beget bewilderment; and are construed
Clear from their purposes? This should not trouble me,
Nor mortal solitude oppress my spirit;
It is for me to walk my single road.
There is in heaven a holy sympathizer,
Shall smile to find me faithful.

WILLIAM CALDWELL ROSCOE,
Violenzia, Act 4, Scene 7.

CHAPTER I.

(1772—1803)

Searching for Truth.

1772, May 22.—His birth at Radhanagar.
1781-82.—Second and third Marriages.
1787.—Leaves home to study Buddhism in Thibet.
1790-91.—Returns home and shortly afterwards settles at Benares.
1800.—Birth of his elder son, Radha Prasad.
1801.—First acquaintance with Mr. John Digby, of Bengal C.S.
1803.—Death of his father, Ram Kant Roy.

Rammohun Roy was born in the village of Radhanagar, near Krishnagar, in the Zilla of Hugli, on the 22nd of May, 1772.*

His pedigree has been preserved up to a very early date, but we need not trace it in detail beyond his great grand-

* Much uncertainty has existed as to the year of Rammohun's birth. The date most frequently accepted is that given on his tombstone, viz., 1774; but I give the earlier date in the text on the following authorities :—The Rev. C. H. A. Dall, in a letter to the *Sunday Mirror* of Jan. 18, 1880, reported that Rammohun's younger son Rama Prasad Roy, said in 1858 before a circle of friends and clients in Calcutta,—"My father was born at Radhanagar, near Krishnagar, in the month of May, 1772; or according to the Bengali era, in the month of Jyaishtha, 1179." Mr. Dall asked for the day of birth, but Rama Prasad was unable to give this. The fact has since, however, been supplied by another lineal descendant of Rammohun, Babu Lalit Mohun Chatterji, who has stated that "Rammohun Roy was born in the year 1772, on the 22nd day of May." For this and other details I am indebted to the kindness of Babu Phani Bhusan Mukherji, of Rajshahee College, who learnt them from Babu Rabindra Nath Tagore, to whom Babu L. M. Chatterji had given the information.

father, Krishna Chandra Banerji,* who entered the service of the Nawab of Bengal, and received from him the title of "Roy Roy," afterwards contracted into Roy, which has ever since remained the designation of the family. This occurred during the reign of the Emperor Aurungzib (1619-1707.)

Krishna Chandra is said to have been an acute and able man, and a zealous member of the Vaishnava sect. He had three sons; Hari Prasad, Amar Chandra, and Brajabinode. Brajabinode Roy was wealthy and philanthropic and devotedly attached to his gods. He was employed under the Nawab Siraj-ud-Dowla in some honourable position at Murshidabad, but on account of some ill treatment, he quitted that employment, and spent the rest of his life at home. His fifth son, Ram Kant Roy, was the father of our hero. But Rammohun's maternal ancestors belonged to the rival sect of the Saktas, of which his mother's father was a priest,—a curious conjuncture of antecedents for the future reformer of Hinduism. How this came to pass is thus narrated :—As Brajabinode Roy lay dying on the banks of the Ganges, a man named Shyama Bhattacharjya, of Chatara near Serampore, came to him requesting a boon. He was of honourable parentage, and his family were well known as the priests of the locality. The kind-hearted Brajabinode readily consented, and swore by the Ganges to grant the boon ; whereupon Shyama Bhattacharjya asked permission to bestow his daughter in marriage upon one of Brajabinode's sons. Now as he was not only the priest of a rival sect, but a *Bhanga Kulin*,† the dying man felt as if he had been trapped,

* [According to Pandit Mahendranath Vidyanidhi, who made careful investigations, it was the great great grand-father of Rammohun Roy, Parasuram Banerjee, who first accepted office under the Mahammadan rulers and was rewarded with the title of Roy-Roy. Edi.]

† A *Bhanga* (or broken) *Kulin* is a Kulin who has broken his ul or Caste.

but having sworn by the Ganges, he could not break his word. So he called his seven sons and requested them, one by one, to make good his promise. All refused except the fifth son, Ram Kant, who readily accepted the unwelcome bride, and in due course married her. They had three children : the eldest was a daughter (name not recorded) ; the second and third were sons, Jaganmohun and Rammohun. The daughter married one Sridhar Mukherji, said to have been a clever man (whose father is reported to have lived to his 125th year), and her son, Gurudas Mukerji, was much attached to his uncle Rammohun, and is said to have been the latter's first convert in his own family.

Ram Kant Roy had also another wife, of whom nothing is known except that she had a son named Ramlochan, of whom but little is recorded. But it is quite evident that Ramohun's mother was the mistress of the household. Her name was Tarini, but she was always called Phulthakurani, *i.e.*, "the fifth son's wife." She was a woman of strong character and of fine understanding, and appears to have had considerable influence over her husband.*

* [She was evidently a remarkable woman both for the firmness of her will and her piety. After the death of her eldest son she took the management of the family property in her own hands and conducted the intricate affairs of the estate satisfactorily. Her treatment to her great son does not seem to have been always kind. When Rammohun Roy left the ancestral house at the age of about sixteen she was, as natural, deeply affected. But afterwards she was very harsh to him for his heterodox religious views. It is even said that Rammohon Roy was compelled to leave the ancestral home and his native vlllage on account of her hostility. Mr. Adam at a public meeting in London soon after the death of Rammohun Roy, said that she had brought a suit against Rammohun Roy in the Supreme Court to disinherit him. Yet Rammohun Roy was invariably respectful and affectionate towards her, and is said to have won her to his views. In her old age she is reported to have said to Rammohun Roy that he was right, but she was too old to change her views. Like many Hindu ladies she was very devout. In her old age she made a pilgrimage

All that is recorded of Ram Kant Roy shows him to have been an upright and estimable man. He, like his father, served for a time (as a Sarcar) under Siraj-ud-Dowla, but subsequently retired to Radhanagar.* Here he rented some villages from the Raja of Burdwan, which seems to have been the first beginning of a long series of disputes between the Raja and the Roy family. Judging from the full report of a lawsuit brought against Rammohun Roy many years later by this Raja, he appears to have been so unscrupulous a man that we may fairly conclude him to have been in the wrong in his early conflicts with Ram Kant Roy, who was often so disgusted with the treatment he received that he would neglect his affairs for a while, and retire to meditate and tell his *Harinam* beads in a garden of sacred Tulsi plants. He was very devout, and a staunch believer in Vishnu as the Supreme God, and in Rama as the last incarnation but one of Vishnu. Fortunately for his domestic peace, his Sakta wife was soon led to adopt his beliefs, which she did so heartily as to occasion some slight friction with her father, if legend speaks truly.

to the shrine of Jagannath at Puri. Though sufficiently rich, out of regard for the deity, she walked all the distance of about 300 or 400 miles) ; this for a respectable Hindu lady, who never before walked out of the precincts of her home, was a remarkable feat. At Puri she used to sweep the yard of the temple daily for a year, as a devout service to the presiding god. Edi.]

* [According to the investigations of Pandit Mahendra Nath Vidyanidhi, Krishna Chandra Banerjee, the great grand-father of Rammohun Roy, and not his father or grand-father, migrated to, and settled at Radhanagar. Krishna Chandra Banerjee, at the recommendation of an official in the service of the Nawab of Murshidabad, was engaged and sent by the Raja of Burdwan to settle accounts with and realise the arrears of rent from Anantaram Chaudhuri of Khanakul. Krishna Chandra accordingly had to come to Khanakul and stay there for some time. He was pleased with the locality and settled there permanently, selecting a site on the left bank of the river Darakeswar opposite Krishnagar. Edi.]

Such was the home into which Rammohun Roy was born. His father spared no expense in his education ; and local traditions assert that he showed great intelligence at an early age, and possessed a remarkably tenacious memory, never forgetting anything which he had once heard or read. After completing his school course of Bengali education, he took up the study of Persian (then the Court language throughout India), and soon became fascinated by the mystic poetry and philosophy of the Persian Sufis, for which he retained an ardent attachmet throughout his life. He was next sent to Patna to learn Arabic, and (it is said, by his mother's desire) to Benares to learn Sanskrit. At Patna his masters set him to study Arabic translations from Euclid and Aristotle, and he then also made acquaintance with the Koran. All these influences, especially the last, tended inevitably towards the disintegration of his earliest religious beliefs, which had been very fervent. His friend, William Adam, wrote of him in 1826:—"He seems to have been religiously disposed from his early youth, having proposed to seclude himself from the world as a *Sannyasi*, or devotee, at the age of fourteen, from which he was only dissuaded by the entreaties of his mother." It is said that his reverence for Vishnu was at one time so great that he would not even take a draught of water without first reciting a chapter of the Bhagavat Puran. The boundless veneration which he is said to have entertained for his father's household deities, is still more characteristically illustrated by the story that he could not bear to witness the performance of the Yatra (or popular play) of *Man Bhanjan*, in which the god Krishna weeps clasping the feet of his fair Radhika, and his peacock head-gear and green clothes are seen rolling in the dust.

Another anecdote is reported of his Hindu period,—that " for the attainment of knowledge and wisdom," he had, at

a great expense, a certain ceremony performed for him 22 times, called *Purashcharan*, consisting in a repetition of the name of a deity, accompanied with burnt offerings.

But Rammohun was not to pass out of this early phase without one mark of Hinduism which remained to colour his whole life. While yet a mere child, his father married him three times. The first bride died "at a very early age" (not specified), and after her death, as we learn from William Adam's letters, "his father, when he was only about nine years of age, married him within an interval of less than a twelvemonth to two different wives. This was in perfect conformity with the usuage of his caste [the Kulin Brahman] and was done when he was incapable of judging for himself."*

At last came the inevitable break. All accounts agree that it was preceded by much theological discussion between Rammohun and his father, and it is probably to this period that we should refer the following reminiscences of Mr. Adam, given in his Memorandum of 1879.

"It is not often that we get an insight into Hindu family life, but his [Ram Kant Roy's] son gave me a slight glance at least in referring to the amicable differences that arose between himself and his father on this subject. I inferred from what R. R. said that he always left it to his father, as the head and most venerable member of the family, to open the question which he thought fit to moot, and when he had finished his immediate argument, he was generally willing to listen to his son with patience, which sometimes, however, forsook him. The son's response after the necessary perliminary admissions, usually began with the adversative particle '*But*' (Kintu). 'But notwithstanding all this, the orthodox conclusion you aim at does not follow.' The father complained of this, and on one occasion, at least, burst out in the tone of remonstrance, as of an injured party: 'Whatever argument I adduce you have always your *Kintu*, your counter-statement, your counter-argument, your counter-conclusion to oppose to me.' The son recounted this to me with half

* The first of these two wives was the mother of his children. She died in 1824. The second wife survived him.

a smile on his lips and a touch of humour in his voice, but without any expression of disrespect to his father.

What follows may best be told in the words of Dr. Lant Carpenter:

"Without disputing the authority of his father, he often sought from him information as to the reasons of his faith; he obtained no satisfaction; and he at last determined at the early age of 15, to leave the paternal home, and sojourn for a time in Thibet, that he might see another form of religious faith.* He spent two or three years in that country, and often excited the angers of the worshippers of the Lama by his rejection of their doctrine that this pretended deity—a living man—was the creator and preserver of the world. In these circumstances he experienced the soothing kindness of the female part of the family; and his gentle, feeling heart lately dwelt with deep interest, at the distance of more than forty years, on the recollections of that period which, he said, had made him always feel respect and gratitude towards the female sex."

The precise extent and duration of his travels is not known; † but they appear to have lasted about three or four years, and to have been terminated by a message of recall from his father, who is said to have grieved much at his absence, and to have shown him great kindness on his return.

* *Review of the Labours, Opinions, and Character of Rammohun Roy*, 1833, pp. 101-102. Dr. Carpenter adds in a foot-note: "The statement made in the preceding [*i.e.*, the above] sentence, I heard from the Rajah himself in London, and again at Stapleton Grove [Bristol]." This testimony is important as distinctly contravening the story that Rammohun left home on account of a family disagreement caused by his having "when about the age of sixteen composed a manuscript calling in question the validity of the idolatrous system of the Hindus;" a story which, although repeated by all Rammohun's biographers, was never heard of till after his death, and rests upon no authority whatever, except the spurious "autobiographical letter" published by Sandford Arnot in the *Athenæum* of Oct. 5, 1833.

† [Rammohun Roy wrote a few articles about his early travels in the *Sambad Kaumudi*, but unfortunately no copies of that magazine could be found. Edi.]

But all accounts agree that he did not remain long under the family roof, the incompatibility being too great. Our only actual knowledge as to his next step is derived from his own evidence in the Burdwan lawsuit already referred to, in which he states that "so far from inheriting the property of his deceased father, he had, during his lifetime, separated from him and the rest of the family, in consequence of his altered habits of life and change of opinions, which did not permit their living together." Whither he betook himself none of his biographers seem to have known; but happily the missing fact is supplied in the letters of his friend, William Adam, who wrote in 1826 that Rammohun, after relinquishing idolatry, "was obliged to reside for ten or twelve years at Benares, at a distance from all his friends and relatives, who lived on the family estate at Burdwan, in Bengal." Referring to this period, another friend has testified as follows:—'So strongly were his feelings wrought upon by the alienation which then commenced, that through life, under the pressure of dejection or disease, the frowning features of his father would rise unbidden on his imagination." *

Probably he fixed his residence at Benares on acccount of the facilities afforded by that sacred city for the study of Sanskrit; and if so, we may conclude that it was chiefly at this period that he acquired his extensive knowledge of the Hindu Shastras. Certainly it was not till then that he began family life on his own account, for his eldest son, Radha Prasad, was born in the year 1800, when Rammohun must have been about twenty-eight years old,—apparently seven years after his return from travel. On what resources he then subsisted does not appear. The only lucrative occu-

* *A Discourse on the Occasion of the Death of Rajah Rammohun Roy*, by W. J. Fox, London, 1883, pp. 16-17. As I have never seen this fact mentioned anywhere else, I conclude that Mr. Fox heard it from Rammohun himself, with whom he was on very friendly terms.

pation in which he is ever known to have been engaged was his work in the Civil Service under the East India Company; but that must certainly be referred to a later date, as he only began to learn English in 1796, and had not obtained much proficiency in it by 1801. Probably, however, in such a seat of Hindu learning as Benares he might have obtained employment by copying manuscripts. In any case, he seems to have remained there until his father's death in 1803. It is a relief to know that after all their differences, the father and son were together at the last. This we learn from Mr. Adam, who reports as follows in his Memorandum:

"R. Roy, in conversation, mentioned to me with much feeling that he had stood by the deathbed of his father, who with his expiring breath continued to invoke his God—Ram! Ram! with a strength of faith and a fervour of pious devotion which it was impossible not to respect although the son had then ceased to cherish any religious veneration for the family deity."

Ram Kant Roy was succeeded in his estate by his son Jaganmohun. Rammohun inherited no portion of his father's property.*

* In Rammohun's evidence on the Burdwan law-suit, he describes his own position as that of "a son separating himself from his father during his lifetime, and by his own exertion acquiring property unconnected with his father, and after his father's death inheriting no portion of his father's property."

CHAPTER II.

(1803—1814.)

Throwing Down the Gauntlet.

Rammohun publishes his first work, *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, or *A Gift to Monotheists.*

He enters the Bengal Civil Service.

1805, May 9.—Mr. John Digby becomes Register at Ramgurh.

1808, June 15.—Mr. Digby becomes Register at Bhagalpur.

1809, Oct. 20.—Mr. Digby becomes Collector at Rungpur.

1811.—Death of Jaganmohun Roy and suttee of his widow. Rammohun's vow.

1812.—Birth of Rammohun's second son, Rama Prasad Roy.

1814.—Rammohun takes up his residence in Calcutta.

Relieved from the fear of paining his father, Rammohun soon began to make his heresies known to the world. He removed to Murshidabad, the old Moghul capital of Bengal, and there he published his first work, a treatise in Persian (with an Arabic preface), entitled *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, or, A Gift to Monotheists. This was a bold protest against the idolatrous element in all established religions,* the drift of the treatise being that while all religions are based on one common foundation, viz., the belief—justified by the facts,—in One Supreme Being who has created and sustains the

* By a very natural mistake, the subject of this treatise was long supposed, in England, to form its actual title, and the essay was always designated by the name—"Against the Idolarty of all Religions." No translation of this treatise appears to have been made until quite recently, when it was rendered into English by a learned and enthusiastic Mahomedan. The full title of his pamphlet is as follows :—*Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin*, or, *A Gift to Deists*, by the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, translated into English by Moulavi Obaidullah El Obaide, Superintendent of the Dacca Government Madrassa, and published under the auspices of the Adi Brahmo Somaj, Calcutta, 1884.

whole universe,—they all differ in the details of the superstructure erected thereupon,—these superstructures being all equally unjustified by any basis of fact, and arising solely from the imagination of men working *in vacuo.* The treatise bears many traces of Rammohun's Patna training, being written in an abstruse style, and abounding with Arabic logical and philosophical terms. Its arrangement is, however, quite unsystematic, and the whole is merely a series of descriptive sketches; but these show much acuteness of observation and reasoning, and are pervaded by a strong tinge of that bitter earnestness which results from the long suppression of intense feeling. The author writes as though he had been obliged to stand by and witness a number of priestly impositions which he could not hinder and was prevented from exposing; and no doubt this had really been the case. The treatise is important as the earliest available expression of his mind, and as showing his eagerness to bear witness against established error but it is too immature to be worth reproducing as a whole. A few passages only are worth quoting as indications of what he was at this early period.

It may be seen that the followers of certain religions believe that the Creator has made mankind for the performance of the duties bearing on our present and future life by observing the precepts of that particular religion; and that the followers of other religions who differ from them are liable to punishment and torment in the future life. And as the members of each particular sect defer the good results of their own acts and the bad results of their rivals' acts to the life after death none of them can refute the dogmas of others in this life. Consequently they sow the seeds of prejudice and disunion in the hearts of each other and condemn each other to the deprivation of eternal blessings—whereas it is quite evident that all of them are living in the equal enjoyment of the external blessings of heaven, such as the light of the stars, the pleasure of the season of spring, the fall of rain, health of body, external and internal good, and other pleasures of life; and that all are equally liable to suffer from inconveniences and pains, such as gloomy darkness,

severe cold, mental disease, narrow circumstances and other outward and inward evils, without any distinction, although following different religions.

The Brahmins have a tradition that they have strict orders from God to observe their ceremonies and hold their faith for ever. There are many injunctions to this effect in the Sanskrit language, and I, the humblest creature of God, having been born among them, have learnt the language and got those injunctions by heart ; and this nation having confidence therein cannot give them up, although they have been subjected to many troubles and persecutions, and were threatened with death by the followers of Islam. The followers of Islam on the other hand, according to the purport of the holy verse of the Koran—'Kill the idolators wherever you find them, and capture the unbelievers in holy war, and after doing so either set them free by way of obligation to them or by taking ransom,'—quote authority from God that killing idolators and persecuting them in every case are obligatory by divine command. Among those idolators the Brahmins, according to the Moslem belief, are the worst. Therefore the followers of Islam, excited by religious zeal, desirous to carry out the orders of God, have done their utmost to kill and persecute the polytheists and unbelievers in the prophetic mission of the Seal of Prophets [Mohammed], and the blessing to the present and future worlds (may the divine benediction rest on him and and his disciples). Now are these contradictory precepts or orders consistent with the wisdom and mercy of the great, generous, and disinterested Creator, or are these the fabrications of the followers of religion ? I think a sound mind will not hesitate to prefer the latter alternative.

There is a saying which is often heard from teachers of different religions as an authority for their several creeds. Each of them says that his religion, which gives information about future reward or punishment after death, is either true or false. In the second case, *i. e.*, if it be false, and there be no future reward or punishment, there is no harm in believing it to be true ; while in the first case, *i. e.*, its being true, there is a great danger for unbelievers. The poor people who follow these expounders of religion, holding this saying to be a conclusive argument, always boast of it. The fact is that habit and training make men blind and deaf in spite of their own eyes and ears. The above saying is fallacious in two respects. Firstly, their saying that in the second case there is no harm in believing it to be true, is not to be admitted. For to believe in the real existence of anything after obtaining proofs of such existence is possible to every

individual man ; but to put faith in the existence of such things as are remote from experience and repugnant to reason is not in the power of a sensible man. Secondly, the entertaining a belief in these things may become the source of various mischiefs and immoral practices, owing to gross ignorance, want of experience, bigotry, deceit, &c. And if this argument were valid, the truth of all forms of religion might be proved therefrom ; for the same arguments may equally be advanced by all. Hence there would be great perplexity for a man. He must either believe all religions to be true, or adopt one and reject the others. But as the first alternative is impossible, consequently the second must be adopted and in this case he has again to make inquiries into truth and falsehood of various religions, and this is the chief object of my discourse.

The followers of different religions, seeing the paucity of the number of Monotheists in the world, sometimes boast that they are on the side of the majority. But it may be seen that the truth of a saying does not depend upon the multitude of sayers, and the non-reliability of a narration cannot result from the small numbers of its narrators. For it is admitted by the seekers of truth, that truth is to be followed although it is against the majority of the people. Moreover, to accept the proposition that the small number of the sayers leads to the invalidity of a saying, seems to be a dangerous blow to all forms of religion. For in the beginning of every religion it had a very few supporters, viz, its founder and a few sincere followers of his, . . . while the belief in only one Almighty God is the fundamental principle of every religion.

In short, men may be divided into four classes in reference to this subject,

Ist. Deceivers who in order to attract the people to themselves, consciously invent doctrines of religious faith and cause disunion and trouble among men.

2nd. Deceived persons who,without inquiring into the facts,follow others.

3rd. Persons who are at the same time deceivers and deceived ; having themselves faith in the sayings of another, they induce others to follow his doctrines.

4th. Those who by the help of Almighty God are neither deceivers nor deceived.

These few short and useful sentences expressing the opinion of this humble creature of God, have been written without any regard to men of prejudice and bigotry, in the hope that persons of sound mind will look thereon with eyes of justice. I have left the details to another work of mine entitled *Manazarutul Adyan,—Discussions on Various Religions.*

P. S. In order to avoid any future change in this book by copyists, I have had these few pages printed just after composition. Let it be known that the benediction pronounced in this book after the mention of prophets is merely done in imitation of the usual custom of the authors of Arabia and Ajan.

The Discussions on Various Religions * above alluded to are, unhappily, no longer procurable. I conclude then it must have been in one of these that Rammohun made some rather sarcastic remarks on Mahomet, to which reference is made by several of his biographers as having excited an amount of anger against him among the Mahomedans which was a chief cause of his removing to Calcutta. In Mr. Leonard's *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, these sarcastic remarks are said (p. 27) to occur in the *Tuhfat*, but certainly no such passage is to be found there. On the other hand it is indubitable that Rammohun always retained a large amount of sympathy with Islam for the sake of its cardinal doctrine of the Unity of God, and that he warmly appreciated the good which had thence resulted in counteracting Hindu idolatry. Mr. Adam says that Rammohun "seemed always pleased to have an opportunity of defending the character and teaching of Mahomet," of whom indeed he began to write a biography which was unhappily never finished.

It must have been at this period that Rammohun Roy entered the Civil Service under the East India Company. The exact date of his doing so I have not been able to ascertain ; but (for several reasons) it can scarcely have been before his father's death, and it must have occurred not long after that event. Our only contemporary information on the subject comes from Mr. John Digby, an English gentleman who was for several years Rammohun's superior officer in the Bengal Civil Service, and who during a visit to England, edited a reprint of Rammohun's traslations of the *Ken*

* [Written in Persian. *Edi.*]

Upanishad and *Abridgment of the Vedanta* (London, 1817) to which he prefixed an interesting account of the translator In this he said :—

Rammohun Roy . . is by birth a Brahmin of very respectable origin, in the province of Bengal, about forty-three* years of age. His acquirements are considerable : to a thorough knowledge of the Sanskrit (the language of the Brahminical Scriptures) he has added Persian and Arabic ; and possessing an acute understanding, he early conceived a contempt for the religious prejudices and absurd superstitions of his caste. At the age of twenty-two [really twenty-four, *i. e.*, in 1796] he commenced the study of the English language, which not pursuing with application, he, five years afterwards [1801], when I became acquainted with him, could merely speak it well enough to be understood upon the most common topics of discourse, but could not write it with any degree of correctness. He was afterwards employed as Dewan,or principal native officer,in the collection of revenues, in the district of which I was for five years Collector, in the East India Company's Civil Service. By perusing all my public correspondence with diligence and attention, as well as by corresponding and conversing with European gentlemen, he acquired so correct a knowledge of the English language as to be enabled to write and speak it with considerable accuracy. He was also in the constant habit of reading the English newspapers, of which the Continental politics chiefly interested him and from thence he formed a high admiration of the talents and prowess of the late ruler of France, and was so dazzled with the splendour of his achievements as to become sceptical as to the commission, if not blind to the atrocity of his crimes, and could not help deeply lamenting his downfall, notwithstanding the profound respect he ever professed for the English nation ; but when the first transports of his sorrow had subsided, he considered that part of his political conduct which led to his abdication to have been so weak, and so madly ambitious, that he declared his future detestation of Buonaparte would be proportionate to his former admiration.

From a paper furnished to me by the courtesy of the India Office, I learn that Mr. Digby was never so long as five years

* Had Rammohun Roy been forty-three in 1817 he would have been born in 1774. As this is the date given on his tombstone,it must have been later than the true date, all the intermediate dates of his age specified by Mr. Digby must be raised by two years.

at any station except that of Rungpur, where he served from October 20, 1809, to December, 1814, when he returned to England for a few years. Now it is at Rungpur that popular tradition chiefly connects the name of Rammohun Roy with Mr. Digby; but as Mr. Digby was previously at Ramgurh (1805 to 1808) and Bhagalpur (1808 to 1809), and as Rammohun mentions in his evidence on the Burdwan law-suit having resided at "Ramgurh, Bhagalpur, and Rungpur," it is highly probable that he was working under Mr. Digby in the two former localities before he went to Rungpur; although we have no details as to the successive posts which he then occupied.

It is usually stated by Rammohun's biographers that "a written agreement was signed by Mr. Digby to the effect that Rammohun should never be kept standing (a custom enforced by European Civil Servants towards natives of the highest rank) in the presence of the Collector, and that no order should be issued to him as a mere Hindu functionary." So far as I can trace, this statement first appeared in a letter by Mr. R. Montgomery Martin (in whose words I have quoted it) in the *Court Journal* of October 5, 1833, just after Rammohun's death. So many statements in that letter are undoubtedly erroneous that I can feel no assurance as to the fact of this written agreement. There can, however, be no doubt that Mr. Digby held Rammohun in high regard, and that a sincere friendship existed between them, honourable alike to both.

Mr. G. S. Leonard in his *History of the Brahmo Somaj*, based on a MS. work by a highly respected member of the Adi Brahmo Somaj, makes the following statement :—

The permanent settlement of Zemindaries under Lord Cornwallis in 1793, and its ratification by the Court of Directors some three years after, required a general survey and assessment of all lands in Bengal under European collectors, some of whom were empowered with the settlement of several districts at once. Mr. Digby had the charge of settling the districts of Rungpur, Dinajpur and Purnea, a work which kept him employ-

ed for three years, and in the execution of which he gained a lasting renown in the memory of the people for justice and probity, a result which is mainly due to the exertions of his *dewán.*

Pandit Siva Nath Sastri mentions in his excellent, but unfortunately unpublished,* *History of the Brahmo Somaj*, that the state of things in the above mentioned districts of Northern Bengal

. . . was especially complicated. Here there were many powerful landlords who had a large number of unsettled disputes, and almost every individual case of settlement involved the examination of a variety of records and documents and the consideration of conflicting claims. In many cases there were no documents whatever to substantiate the claims of actual owners of land, and they required personal attendance and local inquiry from the settlement officer. In settlement work in those days, the trusted native Sheristadars were, as a rule, the chief agents employed by the Collectors, who were guided to a large extent by their decisions and counsels.

Mr. Leonard enumerates as Rammohun's special qualifications for this work, his "proficiency in zemindary accounts and land surveying"; "his acquaintance with all the cunning and dishonest devices of the Amins and Amlahs in furnishing false accounts and statements"; and also "the practical reforms he suggested regarding the ascertaining of rightful ownerships and descriptions of land, &c." I have not been able to procure any original documents of this period which could fix dates and events; but the above summaries come from reliable sources and may be accepted as genuine.

From all accounts, it was during his residence in Rungpur that Rammohun first began to assemble his friends together for evening discussions on religious subjects, especially on the untenableness and absurdities of idolatry. Rungpur was then a place of considerable resort, and among its inhabitants were a good many merchants from Marwar in Rajputana, Jainas by faith. Some of these Marwaris used to attend Rammohun's meetings, and Mr. Leonard says that "he had to learn on their

* [The work has now been published in two volumes. Edi.]

account the *Kalpa Sutra*, and other books appertaining to the Jaina religion," and adds :—

He met, however, with much opposition from a counter party headed by Gauri Kanta Bhattacharjya, a learned Persian and Sanskrit scholar, who challenged him in a Bengali book entitled the *Gyan Chandrika*. This man was Dewan to the Judge's Court at Rungpur, and his influence enabled him to gather a large body of men about him whom he hounded on to Rammohun Roy, but without any success.

A far more serious hostility was that of his mother. As already mentioned,the family estate passed at Ram Kant Roy's death in 1803, into the hands of his eldest son, Jaganmohun. He died in 1811. To whom it then passed, I have sought in vain to discover. Certainly it did not go to Rammohun Roy ; yet a few years later we find him in possession of it, and his mother bringing suits against him to deprive him of the property on the ground of his dissent from the current religion. I have not succeeded hitherto in obtaining any published report of these suits, but the following passage from William Adam leaves no doubt as to their reality.

When the death of Rammohun Roy's elder brother made him the head of the family, she [his mother] instituted suits against her son both in the King's and Company's Courts, with a view to disinherit him as an apostate and infidel, which according to strict Hindu law, excludes from the present and disqualifies for the future, possession of any ancestral property, or even according to many authorities, of any property that is self-acquired.

In this attempt she was defeated ; but for many years he had much to suffer from her persecution. In his great grandson's *Anecdotes* there is a story of his going to see her on returning from Rungpur, and being harshly repulsed from her embrace, when she is reported to have said,—"If you would touch me, you must first go and bow down before my Radha and Govinda" ; whereupon, it is added, "Rammohun, who so loved his mother, submitted and went to the house of the gods and said—"I bow down before my mother's god and goddess." If this be true, it can scarcely have been done so

as to impose seriously on his mother, for he never relaxed in his public attitude towards idolatry. But the anecdote may stand as a half-mythical illustration of the great reluctance with which he opposed his parents' faith. Another of these anecdotes tells of his mother's anger because, when in bad health, he had by his doctor's advice, taken some broth made from goat's flesh. On this occasion, it is said, she raised a great disturbance, and adjured the family thus :—"Be careful ! Rammohun has turned Christian, and has begun to eat forbidden things. Let us all unite and drive him from my ground ; wholesale ruin has begun !" This would seem to imply that he still held some footing in Burdwan, and did not reside entirely at Rungpur during the whole of Mr. Digby's five years there (1809 to 1814). Probably his family still remained in the ancestral neighbourhood. At any rate, it is clear that owing to his mother's hostility, he had to remove them. But the whole of Krishnagar belonged to her, and she would not let him have any land there for his own. He therefore took up his quarters on a large burning-ground at the village of Raghunathpur not far off, and there he built a house for himself.

It must have been during this period that one of his hostile neighbours, named Ramjay Batabyal, an inhabitant of the village of Ramnagar near Krishnagar, resorted to a curious mode of persecution. He collected a number of men who used to go to Rammohun's house early in the morning and imitate the crowing of cocks, and again at nightfall to throw cow-bones into the house. These proceedings greatly annoyed and disturbed Rammohun's womankind, but he himself took it with perfect coolness, and made no retort whatever ; which enraged his persecutors all the more. At last, however, finding him hopelessly impervious, they wearied of their attacks and desisted therefrom.*

* [His adversaries soon adopted more serious measures to trouble and

With respect to the family estate, which probably passed at the death of Jagamohun Roy to his son, Govinda Prasad Roy, it has been suggested to me by one of Rammohun's descendants that Govinda Prasad may have failed to continue the payment of the land tax, in which case the estate would have been thrown into the market ; and that Rammohun, who had by that time saved money in Government Service, may have bought it in. Certainly he came into possession of it while his mother still lived. It would appear, however, that after he had established his right to the property, he did not at once take possession of it, from reluctance to pain his relatives, and that "for sometime everything remained as before in the hands of his mother. She taking up the superintendence of the land under her own care, managed the affairs most successfully. . . It is said that Phulthakurani used to place before her all her numerous gods and godesses while superintending the management of her landed property."*

It is always stated by Rammohun's biographers that in his ten years' Government Service he saved enough money to enable him to become a zemindar or landowner, with an annual income of Rs. 10,000 (about £1, 000). Commenting on this fact, Babu Kishory Chand Mitra, in a long and elaborate sketch of Rammohun which appeared in the *Calcutta Review* of December, 1845, insinuates that such gains raise the suspicion that he "sold justice." "If", he

humiliate him. They tried to excommunicate him. At the time of the marriage of his eldest son, they endeavoured to persuade people not to give any girl in marriage to him on account of the father's religious views. There was a great commotion in the community, but the designs of his enemies were frustrated. A respectable gentleman of Irpara in the district of Hugli gave his daughter in marriage to the son of Rammohun Roy. Edi.]

* *Some Anecdotes from the Life of Raja Rammohun Roy*, by Nanda Mohun Chatterji, Calcutta, 1217 Sal (1811, A. D.)

says, "Rammohun Roy did keep his hands clean, and abstained, as in the absence of all positive evidence to the contrary we are bound to suppose, from defeating the ends of justice for a—consideration—he must have been a splendid exception."* Mr. Leonard, in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, refutes these unworthy suspicions by pointing out that "if Kishory Chand had possessed any knowledge of the duties of a dewan in those early days, and the legal perquisites appertaining to the office recognised by Government," he would not have been entitled to wonder at Rammohun Roy's gains. "It is no great achievement to amass by frugality and thrift a lakh of rupees after ten years' service, the value of a dependent Taluk of Rs. 10,000, when others have been known by a service of half or a quarter that time, to have made a provision of ten times that amount." Mr. Leonard also remarks that "had Mr. Digby's dewan been so corrupt as he is suspected to have been, Mr. Digby himself would never have obtained renown for justice and probity." But the insinuations of K. C. Mitra, though admittedly made "in the absence of all positive evidence," have unhappily been repeated from the early memoir by later writers, and were reproduced so lately as 1888 in the *Saturday Review*. So difficult is it to rectify a false impression once given.

Mr. Digby left Rungpur for England at the end of 1814; and in the course of that year Rammohun took up his residence in Calcutta.* But previous to doing so, he seems to have been living for a short interval at his house on the burning-ground at Raghunathpur. In front of this house he erected a *mancha* or pulpit, for the purpose of worship

* [Rammohun Roy seems to have early made up his mind to settle in Calcutta and the house at Maniktala where he began to live on his removal to Calcutta had been purposely built under the superintendence of his step-brother Ramlochan Roy. Edi.]

and engraved upon each of its sides three mottos from the Upanishads. (1) "*Om*" (*aum*)—the most venerable and solemn designation of the Hindu Trinity; (2) "*Tat Sat*," That [*i. e.*, He] is Truth; and (3) "*Ekamevadvitiyam*,"—The One without a second. Here he offered his prayers thrice a day; and on going home, and on again returning to Calcutta, he would first walk round this *mancha*, said to be still standing. It was in reference to this *mancha* that his youngest wife, Uma, is said to have asked him which religion was the best and highest? Rammohun is said to have replied: "Cows are of different colours, but the colour of the milk they give is the same. Different teachers have different opinions, but the essence of every religion is to adopt the true path,"—*i e.*, to live a faithful life.

One other family event in this preparatory period of Rammohun's life must be chronicled here. At the death of his eldest brother Jaganmohun in 1811, the widow became a Suttee. It is said that Rammohun had endeavoured to persuade her beforehand against this terrible step, but in vain. When, however, she felt the flames she tried to get up and escape from the pile; but her orthodox relations and the priests forced her down with bamboo poles, and kept her there to die, while drums and brazen instruments were loudly sounded to drown her shrieks. Rammohun,* unable to save her, and filled with unspeakable indignation and pity, vowed within himself, then and there, that he would never rest until the atrocious custom was rooted out.† And he kept his vow. Before 19 years had fully elapsed, that pledge was redeemed by the Government decree abolishing Suttee, Dec. 4, 1829.

* [There is evidently some confusion here. Rammohun was at Rungpur at the time of his brother's death. The incident narrated here must have happened on some other occasion. Edi.]

† For this anecdote we are indebted to Babu Raj Narain Bose, who learnt the fact from his father, an esteemed disciple of Rammohun Roy. See Nagendra Nath Chatterji's life of R. M. Roy (p. 23), Calcutta 1880

CHAPTER III.

(1814—1820.)

First Regular Campaign : Spiritual Theism versus Idolatry and Suttee.

1814.—Rammohun settles in Calcutta.

1815—Founds the Atmiya Sabha or Friendly Association. Translates the *Vedanta* into Bengali.

1816.—Writes *Abridgment of the Vedanta*, and publishes it in Bengali, Hindusthani, and English. Translates the *Kena* and *Isho Upanishads* into Bengali and English.

1817.—Letter to Mr. Digby. Writes "*A Defence of Hindu Theism.*" Parts I and II. Translates *Mandukya Upanishad* into Bengali. Translates *Munduk* and *Katha Upanishads* into Bengali and English.

1818, Nov. 30.—Publishes the English edition of his first tract on Suttee.

1819, 19th Pous.—Great meeting of Atmiya Sabha ; discussion with Subrahmanya Sastri.

1820, Feb. 26.—Publishes English version of his second tract on Suttee.

At last, in the year 1814, at the age of forty-two, Rammohun Roy emerged from provincial obscurity, and took up his abode in the capital of British India. He was now in the prime of manhood ; a majestic looking man, nearly six feet in height, and remarkable for his dignity of bearing and grace of manner, as well as for his handsome countenance and speaking eyes. He seems to have owned two houses in Calcutta, but that of which we chiefly hear was his garden house at Maniktola, which he furnished in the English style. Babu Rakhal Das Haldar says that Rammohun's Calcutta house was built for him by his half-

brother (whom Babu Rakhal calls Ramtanu Roy, though he is usually known as Ramlochan). Here then Rammohun settled himself, and took up his life's work in thorough earnest.

How formidable that work was, can with difficulty be realised at the present day. Thick clouds of ignorance and superstition hung over all the land ; the native Bengali public had few books, and no newspapers. Idolatry was universal, and was often of a most revolting character ; polygamy and infanticide were widely prevalent, and the lot of Bengali women was too often a tissue of ceaseless oppressions and miseries, while as the crowning horror, the flames of the suttee were lighted with almost incredible frequencey even in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta. The official returns of the years immediately following Rammohun's removal thither, give the number of suttees in the suburbs of Calcutta alone as twenty-five in 1815, forty in 1816, thirty-nine in 1817, and forty-three in 1818,—the ages of these victims ranging from 80, 90, and 100, down to 18, 16, and even 15. All these inhumanities deeply afflicted the heart of Rammohun Roy. An ardent lover of his country, he longed to deliver her from her degradations, and to set her feet on safe paths, and to that end he devoted his whole energies from this time forth. He did not, however, confine his activity to one or two subjects. His alert and eager mind ranged with keen interest over the whole field of contemporary life, and in almost every branch thereof he left the impress of his individuality. Alike in religion, in politics, in literature, and in philanthropy, his labours will be found among the earliest and most effective in the history of native Indian reform.

In chronicling a life of such manifold and simultaneous activities in various fields, the best way to avoid needless repetition will be to keep as closely as possible to the chronological order of events. I shall, therefore, divide the sixteen

years of Rammohun's Calcutta life into four periods, which mark the successive stages in his treatment of the main problems of his day. These periods are (1) from 1814 to 1820; (2) from 1820 to 1824; (3) from 1824 to 1828; (4) from 1828 to September, 1830. The three years which followed, mostly spent in England,—where he died in September, 1833,—form a separate period altogether, and may be regarded as a general epilogue to the whole.*

Commencing with the first of these periods, we soon see that to Rammohun's mind the root evil of the whole wretched state of Hindu society was idolatry, and to destroy this was his first object. His multifarious researches in the various sacred books of India had shown him how comparatively modern was the popular Hinduism then current, and with what gross corruptions it had superseded the earlier forms of Hindu faith and practice. Single-handed as he was, he naturally sought the path of least resistance, and by appealing to the venerated authorities of the more ancient and spiritual scriptures, he endeavoured to purify and elevate the minds of his countrymen. For this purpose he selected some of the chief productions of the Vedantic system, "which (writes Pandit Siva Nath Sastri) were of unquestionable authority in matters of Hindu theology. With the general decline of learning, these writings had fallen into disuse in the province of Bengal, and there were very few men even amongst those who were reputed to be learned at that time who were familiar with their contents." In 1815 he published his translation of the Vedant Sutra itself from the original Sanskrit into Bengali; and in 1816 he published a brief summary of this in Bengali, Hindusthani and English. It had been his wish to "render a translation of the complete Vedant into the current languages of this country," but this was never

* To the third period two chapters are devoted (v., vi.); to the rest one chapter each.—*Continuator.*

4

fully carried out. He recounts, however, how "during the interval between my controversial engagements with idolators as well as with advocates of idolatry, I translated several of the ten Upanishads of which the Vedant or principal part of the Veds consist." Of these the *Kena* and *Ishopanishads* appeared in 1816, and the *Katha*, *Munduk* and *Mandukya Upanishads* in 1817; and all of these except the last he translated into English also. These works he published with introductions and comments, and distributed them widely among his countrymen, free of charge.

The following extracts, written in 1816, will show the earnest feelings with which he started his propaganda.

My constant reflections on the inconvenient, or rather injurious rites, introduced by the peculiar practice of Hindu idolatry, which more than any other Pagan worship, destroys the texture of society, together with compassion for my countrymen, have compelled me to use every possible effort to awaken them from their dream of error: and by making them acquainted with their Scriptures, enable them to contemplate with true devotion the unity and omnipresence of Nature's God.

By taking the path which conscience and sincerity direct, I, born a Brahmin, have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches, even of some of my relations, whose prejudices are strong, and whose temporal advantage depends upon the present system. But these, however accumulated, I can tranquilly bear; trusting that a day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice,—perhaps acknowledged with gratitude. At any rate, whatever men may say, I cannot be deprived of this consolation: my motives are acceptable to that Being who beholds in secret and compensates openly!*

Some Europeans, endued with high principles of liberality, but not acquainted with the ritual part of Hindu idolatry are disposed to palliate

* Final paragraphs to the Preface of his first English work, whose title was in itself a manifesto of the new crusade which he was initiating:—"*Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant, or Resolution of all the Veds;* the most celebrated and revered work of Brahminical Theology: establishing the Unity of the Supreme Being: and that He Alone is the object of propitiation and worship. Calcutta, 1816."—*English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy*, I. 5.

it by an interpretation which, though plausible, is by no means well founded. They are willing to imagine that the idols which the Hindus worship are not viewed by them in the light of Gods or as real personifications of the divine attributes ? but merely as instruments for raising their minds to the contemplation of those attributes, which are respectively represented by different figures. I have frequently had occasion to remark, that many Hindus also who are conversant with the English language, finding this interpretation a more plausible apology for idolatry than any with which they are furnished by their own guides, do not fail to avail themselves of it, though in repugnance both to their faith and to their practice. The declarations of this description of Hindus naturally tend to confirm the original idea of such Europeans, who from the extreme absurdity of pure unqualified idolatry, deduce an argument against its existence. It appears to them impossible for men, even in the very last degree of intellectual darkness, to be so far misled as to consider a mere image of wood or of stone as a *human being*, much less as divine existence. With a view, therefore, to do away with any misconception of this nature which may have prevailed, I beg leave to submit the following considerations.

Hindus of the present age, with a very few exceptions, have not the least idea that it is to the attributes of the Supreme Being as figuratively represented by shapes corresponding to the nature of those attributes, they offer adoration and worship under the denomination of gods and goddesses. On the contrary, the slightest investigation will clearly satisfy every inquirer that it makes a material part of their system to hold as articles of faith all those particular circumstances which are essential to the belief in the independent existence of the object of their idolatry as deities clothed with divine power.

Locality of habitation and a mode of existence analogous to their own views of earthly things are uniformly ascribed to each particular god. Thus the devotees of Siva, misconceiving the real spirit of the Scriptures, not only place an implicit credence in the separate existence of Siva, but even regard him as an omnipotent being, the greatest of all the divinities, who, as they say, inhabit the northern mountain of Kailas ; and that he is accompanied by two wives and several children, and surrounded with numerous attendants. In like manner the followers of Vishnu, mistaking the allegorical representations of the Sastras for relations of real facts, believe him to be chief over all other gods, and that he resides with his wife and attendants on the summit of heaven.

Similar opinions are also held by the worshippers of Kali, in respect to that goddess. And in fact, the same observations are equally applicable to every class of Hindu devotees in regard to their respective gods and goddesses. And so tenacious are those devotees in respect to the honour due to their chosen divinities that when they meet in such holy places as Haridwar, Pryag, Siva-Canchi, or Vishnu-Canchi in the Dekhan, the adjustment of the point of precedence not only occasions the warmest verbal altercations, but sometimes even blows and violence. Neither do they regard the images of these gods merely in the light of instruments for elevating the mind to the conception of those supposed being ; they are simply in themselves made objects of worship. For whenever a Hindu purchases an idol in the market, or constructs one with his own hands, or has one made under his own superintendence, it is his invariable practice to perform certain ceremonies, called Pran Pratishtha, or the endowment of animation, by which he believes that its nature is changed from that of the mere materials of which it is formed, and that it acquires not only life but supernatural powers. Shortly afterwards, if the idol be of the masculine gender, he marries it to a feminine one, with no less pomp and magnificence than he celebrates the nuptials of his own children. The mysterious process is now complete, and the god and goddess are esteemed the arbiters of his destiny, and continually receive his most ardent adoration.

At the same time, the worshipper of images ascribes to them at once the opposite natures of human and of super-human beings. In attention to their supposed wants as living beings, he is seen feeding, or pretending to feed them every morning and evening ; and as in the hot season he is careful to fan them so in cold he is equally regardful of their comfort, covering them by day with warm clothing, and placing them at night in a snug bed. But superstition does not find a limit here : the acts and speeches of the idols, and their assumptions of various shapes and colours, are gravely related by the Brahmins, and with all the marks of veneration are firmly believed by their deluded followers.*

My reflections upon these solemn truths have been most painful for many years. I have never ceased to contemplate with the strongest feelings of regret, the obstinate adherence of my countrymen to their fatal system of idolatry, inducing, for the sake of propitiating their supposed Deities, the violation of every humane and social feeling. And

* Preface to the *Translation of the Ishopanishad.* Calcutta, 1816, *English Works*, I. pp. 77-79.

this in various instances, but more especially in the dreadful acts of self-destruction and the immolation of the nearest relations, under the delusion of conforming to sacred religious rites. I have never ceased, I repeat, to contemplate these practices with feelings of regret, and to view in them the moral debasement of a race who, I cannot help thinking, are capable of better things, whose susceptibility, patience, and mildness of character, render them worthy of a better destiny. Under these impressions, therefore, I have been impelled to lay before them genuine translations of parts of their Scripture, which inculcates not only the enlightened worship of one God, but the purest principles of morality, accompanied with such notices as I deemed requisite to oppose the arguments employed by the Brahmins in defence of their beloved system. Most earnestly do I pray that the whole may, sooner or later, prove efficient in producing on the minds of Hindus in general, conviction of the rationality of believing in and adoring the Supreme Being only ; together with a complete perception and practice of that grand and comprehensive moral principle—*Do unto others as ye would be done by.* *

Such was the standing-ground from which Rammohun Roy opened his first regular campaign. The fame of his provincial discussions and writings had preceded his settlement in Calcutta, and when these were followed up by such increased and systematic opposition to the popular creed, great excitement was produced in Hindu society, and the orthodox feeling against Rammohun soon became very hostile.†

* Concluding paragaph of the *Introduction to the Ishopanishad. English Works*, I. pp. 86-87.

† [At the same time these publications created a very favourable impression among thoughtful Europeans, and spread the fame of Raja Rammohun Roy as a great religious reformer in Europe and America. The first English notice we find of Rammohun Roy occurs in the Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society Vol. VI. pp. 106-109 of the date of 1816 : "Rama-mohuna Raya, a very rich Rarhee Brahmun of Calcutta is a respectable Sungskrita scholar and so well-versed in Persian, that he is called Mouluvee Rama-mohuna Raya : He also writes English with correctness and reads with ease English mathematical and metaphysical works. He has published in Bengalee one or two philosophical works, from the Sungskrita, which he hopes may be

Meanwhile he gathered around him a small circle of intelligent friends who sympathised more or less actively in his desire to enlighten his countrymen ; and in 1815 he started a little society which he entitled the Atmiya Sabha, or

useful in leading his countrymen to renounce idolatry." The narrative gives an account of Rammohun Roy's interview with the Serampore Missionaries and some particulars about his mode of life at this period. A fuller account is found in the Church of England "Missionary Register" for Sept. 1816 p. 370 in the course of a review of the Translation of the Vedant Sutra : "We have been favoured with a sight of a tract printed at Calcutta in the present year (1816) with the following tittle :— "Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant &c."......by Rammohun Roy. Before we give an account of this curious tract, it may be advantageous to our readers to know something of the author." Then follows a brief account of the life and views of Rammohun Roy, with speculations as to the possibility of his becoming a Christian. The review of the Abridgment of the Vedant is very fair. The account closes with the following thoughtful remarks on the propaganda of Rammohun Roy : "The rise of this new sect, the zeal and subtlety displayed by its founder, with its obvious tendency to undermine the fabric of Hindu superstition, are objects of serious attention to the Christian mind. 'Who knows,' asks one of the friends from whom we have received these communications, but this man may be one of the many instruments by which God, in his mysterious providence, may accomplish the overthrow of idolatry? "What may be the effect of this man's labours', says another correspondent, 'time will show. Probably they may bring the craft of Brahmanism and caste into danger."

A notice of the Abridgment of the Vedant is also found in the Monthly Repositary of Theology and General Literature for 1816 p. 512, which is interesting as affording from another quarter a view of the first English work of the Raja :—

"Two literary phenomena of a singular nature have very recently been exhibited in India. The first is a Hindu Deist. Rammohun Roy, a Brahmin, has published a small work, in the present year, at Calcutta, entittled 'An Abrigement of the Vedant &c'—It contains a collection of very remarkable texts from the Vedas, in which the principles of natural religion are delivered, not without dignity ; and which treat all worship to inferior beings, together with the observance of rites and seasons, and

Friendly Association, for the purpose of spiritual improvement. It met once a week, † and its proceedings consisted in the recitation of texts from the Hindu Scriptures, and the chanting of Theistic hymns composed by Rammohun and

the distinctions of food, as the aids of an imperfect religion, which may be altogether disregarded by those who have attained to the knowledge and love of God."

The records of the next year mark a striking progress of Rammohun Roy's fame, as evidenced by the following passage, extracted by the late Miss Mary Carpenter in her Last Days of Rammohun Roy from a letter of Rev. T. Belsham, Minister of Essex Street Chapel, London, as an introduction to a letter he had just received from a native convert to Christianity, William Roberts of Madras :—

"It is very remarkable that while the great doctrine of the unity and unrivalled supremacy of God is thus gradually working its way among the poorer classes of natives in the vicinity of Madras, it is at the same time making a triumphant progress among the higher castes of Hindus in the great and populous city of Calcutta. Rammohun Roy, a learned, eloquent and opulent Brahman, having by the proper exercise of his own understanding, discovered the folly and absurdity of the Hindu mythology and of idol worship, was led by conscientious sense of duty to proclaim this important discovery to his countrymen, and has publicly taught the doctrine of the divine unity and perfection to the native Hindus and has entered his protest against their impious, barbarous and idolatrous rites. Such a doctrine from a person of such exalted rank, at first excited great astonishment and gave infinite offence. But by degrees the courage, eloquence and perseverance of this extraordinary man prevailed over all opposition; and it is said that many hundreds of the native Hindoos, and especially of the young people, have embraced his doctrine."

The European reputation of Rammohan Roy, says Miss Mary Carpenter, as a remarkable man, and a reformer, was not confined to Great Britain. A French pamphlet respecting him was forwarded to

† [These meetings were at first held in the garden house of Rammohun Roy at Maniktala. After two years they were transferred to Rammohan's Simla house (now in the Amherst Street) and subsequently to other places. Edi.]

his friends. Rammohun's Pandit, Siva Prasad Misra, was the first reciter, and a paid singer, Govinda Mala, was the first chanter. "The meetings were not quite public and were attended chiefly by Rammohun's personal friends. Among

the Editor of the " Monthly Repositery," by the Abbe Gregoire, formerely Bishop of Blois, and which was afterwards inserted in the "Chronique Religieuse." The biographical part of this pamphlet was derived from communications from the learned M. D'Acosta, then the Editor of *The Times* at Calcutta. The following extract presents several interesting features of the life of Rammohun Roy, as viewed by a foreigner: "There is probably, throghout India no Brahmin, who is less a Hindoo than he; and thousands of dupes who have suffered the loss of their caste have been less offenders against the peculiarities of their religion than he......Every six months he publishes a little tract in Bengalee and in English developing his system of theism; and he is always ready to answer the pamphlets published at Calcutta or Madras in opposition to him. He takes pleasure in this controversy; but although far from deficeint in philosophy, or in knowledge, he distinguishes himself more by his logical mode of reasoning than by his general views. He appears to feel the advantage which it gives him with the Methodists, some of whom are endeavouring to convert him. He seems to have prepared himself for his polemical career from the logic of the Arabians, which he regards as superior to every other; he asserts, likewise, that he has found nothing in European books equal to the scholastic philosophy of the Hindoos. * * Influenced, like those around him, with the spirit of order, economy and knowledge of the value of money, acquired by their mercantile education, Rammohan Roy does not view the augmentation of property as the most important object: his fortune consists of the wealth he received from his ancestors: he does not give his mind to any kind of commercial speculation. He would consider that mode of life beneath his station and the dignities of a Brahmin. He derives no pecuniary advantage from his works; and in all probability desirous as he may be of power and distinction, he would not accept of the Government any place that should be merely lucrative; to *solicit* one of any description he would not condescend. * * Rammohun Roy, as has already been shown, is not yet forty years old; he is tall and robust; his regular features and habitually grave countenance assume a must pleasing appearance when he is animated. He appears to have

these * may be mentioned Dwarkanath Tagore, Brajamohun Mazumdar, Holodhur Bose, Nanda Kisore Bose † and Rajnarain Sen." ‡ There was a remarkable man who also assisted Rammohun at this time, named Hariharananda

a slight disposition to melanchloy. The whole of his conversation and manners show, at first sight, that he is above mediocrity. * * It is known that every member of his family verifies the proverb, by opposing with the greatest vehemence all his projects of reform. None of them not even his wife, would accompany him to Calcutta, in consequence of which he rarely visits them in Burdwan, where they reside. They have disputed with him even the superintendence of the education of his nephews, and his fanatical mother shows as much ardour in her incessant opposition to him, as he displays in his attempts to destroy the idolatry of the Hindoos."

One more extract giving an impression which Rammohun Roy made on a European contemporary at this period, we shall record. It is taken from a "Journal of a Route across India, through Egypt to England, in the years 1817 and 1818 by Lieut-Col. Fitzclarence" (afterwards Earl of Munster). He writes: "I became well acquainted with him, and admire his talents and acquirements. His eloquence in our language is very great, and I am told he is still more admirable in Arabic and

* [Among the associates of Rammohun Roy the following names also should be mentioned: Gopeemohun Tagore and his son Prasanna Kumar Tagore, Vaidyanath Mukerjee, father of late Justice Anukul Mukherjee, he was one of the organisers of the Hindu College and its first Secretary; Jaikrishna Sinha, Kasinath Mullik, Brindaban Mitra, grandfather of the late Dr. Rajendralal Mitra, Gopinath Munshee, Badan Chandra Roy; Chandra Sekhar Dev, Tarachand Chakravarti, Bhairab Chandra Datta, who afterwards became the Asst. Secretary of the Bethune School, Kalinath Roy, Zeminder of Taki, Boikuntha Nath Roy, one of the first Trustees of the Brahmo Samaj, Annada Prasad Bandopadhyaya, Zeminder of Telinipara, Raja Kali Sankar Ghoshal. Edi.]

† [Father of Raj Narain Bose, who afterwards became a well-known figure in the Brahmo Samaj. Edi.]

‡ This sentence is taken from the *Indian Mirror* of July 1, 1865, from a brief sketch by Keshub Chandra Sen, entitled "Brahmo Samaj, or Theism in India

Tirthaswami. This man, "during his peregrinations as a Hindu mendicant had come to Rungpur, and there met Rammohun, who had received him with great honour in recognition of his learning and liberality of spirit : and Tirtha-

Persian. It is remarkable, that he has studied and thoroughly understands the politics of Europe, but more particularly those of England; and the last time I was in his company he argued forcibly against standing army in a free country, and quoted all the arguments brought forward by the Members of the Opposition. I think that he is in many respects a most extraordinary person. In the first place, he is a religious reformer, who has, amongst a people more bigoted than those of Europe in the middle ages, dared to think for himself. His learning is most extensive, as he is not only conversant with the best books in English, Arabic, Sanskrit, Bengalee and Hindustani, but has even studied rhetoric in Arabic and English and quotes Locke and Bacon on all occasions. From the view he thus takes of the religion, manners and customs of so many nations, and from his having observed the number of different modes of addressing and worshipping the Supreme Being, he naturally turned to his own faith with an unprejudiced mind, found it perverted from the religion of the Vedas to a gross idolatry, and was not afraid, though aware of the consequences, to publish to the world in Bengalee and English his feelings and opinions on the subject; of course he was fully prepared to meet the host of interested enemies, who, from sordid motives, wished to keep the lower classes in a state of the darkest ignorance. I have understood that his family have quitted him—that he has been declared to have lost caste—and is for the present, as all religious reformers must be for a time, a mark to be scoffed at. To a man of his sentiments and rank this loss of caste must be particularly painful, but at Calcutta he associates with the English; he is, however, cut off from all familiar and domestic intercourse; indeed from all communication of any kind with his relations and former friends. His name is Rammohun Roy. He is particularly handsome, not of a very dark complexion, of a fine person, and most courtly manners. He professes to have no objection to eat and live as we do, but refrains from it, in order not to expose himself to the imputation of having changed his religion for the good things of this world. He will sit at table with us while the meat is on it, which no other Brahmin will do.' Edi.

swami, bound to Rammohun by love, followed him like a shadow. He practised the rules of Tantric Bamachar, and was a worshipper of One True God according to the Mahanirvana Tantra. Ram Chandra Vidyabagish, the first minister of the Brahmo Samaj was the younger brother of this man."*

If Hariharananda Tirthaswami represented the extreme Eastern side of Rammohun's society, the extreme Western side was represented by David Hare, the active and benevolent rationalist who did so much for native Bengal education. In his life by Pyarichand Mitra we read as follows :—

"Hare found an intimate friend in Rammohun Roy. He had begun to spread Theism, denounce idolatry, was moving heaven and earth for the abolition of the Suttee rite, and advocating the dissemination of English education as the means for enlightening his countrymen, . . . The first move he (Hare) made, was in attending, uninvited, a meeting called by Rammohun Roy and his friends for the purpose of establishing a society calculated to subvert idolatry. Hare submitted that the establishment of an English school would materially help their cause. They all acquiesced in the strength of Hare's position, but did not carry out his suggestion." Hare, therefore, consulted Chief Justice Sir E. Hyde East, who inclined favourably to his ideas. The subject was mooted among leading Hindus, meetings were held at Sir E. H. East's house, and it was resolved that "an establishment be formed for the education of native youth." Rammohun Roy, fearing that his presence at the preliminary meeting might embarass its deliberations, had generously abstained from attending it, but his name had been mentioned as one of the promoters. Soon afterwards some of the native

* From a letter signed "A devoted disciple of Rammohun Roy," in the *Tattwabodhini Patrika* for Agrahayan, 1789 Sak (1865, A. D.).

gentlemen concerned, told Sir Hyde East that they would gladly accord their support to the proposed College if Rammohun Roy were not connected with it, but they would have nothing to do with that apostate. Hare communicated this to Rammohun Roy, who willingly allowed himself to be laid aside lest his active co-operation should mar the accomplishment of the project. This was early in 1816. So soon had Hindu orthodoxy taken alarm and so early had Rammohun been called upon to exercise that self-effacingness with which, many a time in his life, did he withhold his name from benevolent schemes for which he nevertheless worked, in order to smooth their reception by the general public, to whom his name was an offence.

About the end of Rammohun's third year in Calcutta, he wrote (fortunately for us) a brief summary of his proceedings to his old friend Mr. Digby, to whom he also sent his first two English publications, the *Abridgment of the Vedant* and the *Kena Upanishad.* These translations Mr. Digby reprinted in London in 1817, with a preface which beginning with the description of Rammohun quoted in the last chapter, goes on to give the following extract ("made without alteration") from "a letter I have lately received from him, intimately connected with the subject before me."

Rammohun Roy to Mr. John Digby, England.

"I take this opportunity of giving you a summary account of my proceedings since the period of your departure from India.

"The consequence of my long and uninterrupted researches int religious truth has been that I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles, and better adapted for the use of rational beings, than any others which have come to my knowledge ; and have also found Hindus in general more superstitious and miserable, both in performance of their religious rites, and in their domestic concerns, than the rest of the known nations on the earth : I therefore, with a view of

making them happy and comfortable* both here and hereafter, not only employed verbal arguments against the absurdities of the idolatry practised by them, but also translated their more revered theological work, namely Vedant, into Bengali and Hindustani, and also several chapters of the Ved, in order to convince them that the unity of God, and absurdity of idolatry, are evidently pointed out by their own Scriptures. I, however, in the beginning of my pursuits, met with the greatest opposition from their self-interested leaders, the Brahmins, and was deserted by my nearest relations; I consequently felt extremely melancholy; in that critical situation, the only comfort that I had was the consoling and rational conversation of my European friends, especially those of Scotland and England.

"I now with the greatest pleasure inform you that several of my countrymen have risen superior to their prejudices; many are inclined to seek for the truth: and a great number of those who dissented from me have now coincided with me in opinion. This engagement has prevented me from proceeding to Europe as soon as I could wish. But you may depend upon my setting off for England within a short period of time; and if you do not return to India before October next, yow will most probably receive a letter from me, informing you of the exact time of my departure for England, and of the name of the vessel on which I shall embark."

Mr. Digby returned to India in November, 1819, and was again employed in the Bengal Civil Service. During 1821 and 1822 he was stationed at Burdwan, where he would doubtless have many opportunities of meeting his old friend. Rammohun's much longed for visit to England did not take place

* To make men "comfortable" may at first sound rather a low aim for a religious reformer; but the preface to the *Kena Upanishad* explains Rammohun's meaning, which was simply to break the superstitious fetters that made utterly needless *dis*comfort an essential feature of orthodox Hindu life. In this preface he expresses his desire "to correct these exceptionable practices which not only deprive Hindus in general of the common comforts of society, but also lead them frequently to self-destruction. . . . A Hindu of caste can only eat once between sunrise and sunset—cannot eat dressed victuals in a boat or ship—nor clothed—nor in a tavern,—nor any food that has been touched by a person of a different caste—nor if interrupted while eating, can he resume his meal.—*English Works of R. M. Roy.* Vol. I., p. 30.

until the end of 1830. It is interesting to know how early he had formed that desire.

The year 1817 saw further progress of the movement. Rammohun's publications now began to call forth learned and animated replies from the defenders of Hinduism. The *Madras Courier*, in December, 1816, contained a long letter from the head English master in the Madras Government College, Sankara Sastri, controverting Rammohun's views as shown in his writings, and pleading for the worship of Divine attributes as virtual deities. Rammohun reprinted this letter with a masterly reply entitled *A Defence of Hindu Theism*, in which he not only defended his own position very clearly, but carried the war into the enemy's camp by exposing the degrading character of the legends attached to so many of the Hindu incarnations, and pointing out how mischievous must be the effect of regarding such narratives as sacred records. Another defender of Hinduism appeared some months later in the head Pandit of the Government College at Calcutta, Mrityunjaya Vidyalankar, who published a tract entitled *Vedanta Chandrika*. To this Rammohun replied in *A Second Defence of the Monotheistical System of the Veds.* In this tract, substantially the same arguments as before were put forth, but with still greater fullness and force. These writings were, however,largely supplemented and strengthened by Rammohun's numerous oral discussions and conversations with his friends, disciples and opponents,—of which we can only now get occasional glimpses. Pandit S. N. Sastri states in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj* that

"At times the Atmiya Sabha got up intereststing discussion meetings which would attract all classcs of people. The most remarkable of these meetings was the one held in December, 1819 [17th of Pous], where Rammohun Roy had a face to face fight with his idolatrous adversaries. A learned Madrasi Pandit, called Subrahmanya Sastri, renowned at that

time for his erudition, publicly challenged him to a polemical combat. Rammohun Roy accepted it with pleasure, and in the presence of a large gathering of people, headed by Radhakanta Dev, the acknowledged leader of the orthodox Hindu community, silenced his adversary by the great cogency of his reasoning, as well as by the long array of scriptural authorities that he quoted in favour of his views." *

[Defeated in theological debate, his opponents renewed their attack upon him in the law courts. "Shortly after" this debate Rammohun's nephew (his brother's son) "brought an action against him in the Supreme Court in order to disinherit him from any participation in the ancestral property, on the score of his being an apostate from the Hindu religion."† The endeavour was made to prove that he had broken caste and so forfeited his civil rights. The proceedings lasted some two years, and involved him in great expense, but ended in a complete victory for Rammohun. But during these two years he considered it advisable to discontinue holding the meetings of the Atmiya Sabha, which earlier litigation had compelled him to have convened in the houses of friends instead of his own, as previously.] ‡

An interesting sign of the progress of Rammohun's views

* [This discussion was held at the house of Behari Lal Chaubay in Barabazar where the Atmiya Sabha used to meet at this period. Edi.]

† So Nagendranath Chattopadhyaya in his Biography of the Raja (p. 62) : and G. S. Leonard in his "*History of the Brahma Samaj*" (Newman & Co., Calcutta, 1879) p. 35.

‡ *Ibid.* Rev. K. S. Macdonald in his lecture on the Raja (*Herald* Office, Calcutta, 1876) thinks that this giving up of these meetings "does not look well," . . "seemingly because he was afraid their very existence would prejudice his worldly interests." Mr. Macdonald apparently forgets that during the latter part of these two yearsRammohun was in regular attendence on Mr. W. Adam's Unitarian services and was openly identified with the Unitarian Committee.—For the sentences enclosed in brackets and notes, the continuator is responsible.

is recorded at the beginning of 1820. A native called as a witness in a court of law refused to take the waters of Gunga. He declared himself a follower of Rammohun Roy, and consequently not a believer in the imagined sanctity of the river. He was allowed to affirm as Quakers do. Our Reformer may thus be regarded as a pioneer in the abolition of oaths in courts of law.

We must now take up the other main branch of Rammohun's propaganda, agitation against Suttee. His first tract on this subject appeared in November, 1818, in the form of a dialogue between an opponent and an advocate of the custom ; and in February, 1820, this was followed by a second tract giving a later dialogue between the same interlocutors. But before speaking of these in detail, some brief account must be given of the state at which the controversy had arrived at that time.

A *Sati*,—long since Anglicised as Suttee—means literally a faithful woman, from *Sat*—truth ; but the term has long been practically narrowed to designate a widow who is burned on the funeral pile of her husband. This "rite" (as it is euphemistically called) was never universal in India, but it has been practised more or less extensively in various localities and amongst various classes in that country. M. Barth, in his admirable work on *The Religions of India*, says (p. 59) :—

"A custom which . . . could beyond a doubt reckon its victims by myriads, the immolation, viz., more or less voluntary * of the widow on the funeral pile of of her husband, is not sanctioned by the Vedic ritual, although certain hints in

* [It has been established on the testimony of European eye-witnesses that at the beginning of the nineteenth century,at any rate,force was used to prevent the victims from escaping from the burning pyre. Mr. J. Peggs publlshed a booklet under the name of "The Suttee's cry to Britain" in which he wrote :—

"The use of force by means of bamboos is, we believe, universal

the symbolism connected with funerals (particularly in the Atharva-Veda) come very near it, and in a measure foreshadow it. In the Atharva-Veda we see the widow could marry again under certain conditions, which in the course of time orthodox usage strictly debarred her from doing. The custom of the suicide of the *Sati* is nevertheless very ancient since as early as the days of Alexander the Greeks found it was observed among one of the tribes at least of the Panjab. The first Brahmanical testimony we find to it is that of the *Brihaddevata*, which is perhaps of quite as remote antiquity ; in the epic poetry there are numerous instances of it. At first it seems to have been peculiar to the military aristocracy, and it is under the influence of the sectarian religions that it has especially flourished. Justice requires us to add that it was only at a period comparatively modern that it ceased to meet with opposition."

Sir John Malcolm in one of his Reports on Central India, says that "the Mahometan rulers endeavoured, as much as they could without offending their Hindu subjects, to prevent it." The zeal of the Emperor Akbar in the matter is well known, and the *Asiatic Journal* of January, 1824, states that the practice "was discouraged and even forbidden by the Moghul Government, and the Peishwa was in the habit of personally exerting himself to dissuade widows from be-

through Bengal. In the burning of widows as practised at present in some parts of Hindustan, however voluntary the widow may have been in her determination, force is employed in the act of immolation. After she has circumambulated and ascended the pile, several natives leap on it, and pressing her down on the wood, bind her with two or three ropes to the corpse of her husband, and instantly throw over the two bodies, thus bound to each other, several large bamboos, which being firmly fixed to the ground on both sides of the pile, prevent the possibility of her extricating herself when the flames reach her. Logs of wood are also thrown on the pile, which is then inflamed in an nstant." Edi.

coming Suttees, making suitable provision for those who yielded to his arguments.*

When the European powers came to obtain footing in India, they also usually seemed to have endeavoured to stop the Suttee rite. The French, the Dutch, and the Portuguese Colonies all exerted themselves in this direction, and with fair success. The English were no less humanely shocked by the practice, and frequently made efforts to stop it, but the official class were considerably hampered by the dread of offending native prejudices and thus imperilling the British power in India. At last, however, serious efforts were made by philanthropists in England, both in the House of Commons and in the East India House, and in 1821 the first Blue Book on the subject was issued.

From this valuable storehouse of evidence we find that the first recorded British action in this matter took place in the very year of Rammohun's birth, 1772; when a Captain Tomyn, of Tripetty in Southern India, hearing that a widow was about to be sacrificed, went straightway to the spot, and led her away to a place of safety. This truly British course drew down upon him a formidable riot from a large and indignant crowd. But the first deliberate official step taken on this subject was the refusal, in January 1789, of a British magistrate to permit the performance of a Suttee at Shahabad. His letter to the Governor-General in Council, Lord Cornwallis, is so terse and sensible, that it is worth preserving:—

*My Lord.—Cases sometimes occur in which a Collector having no specific orders for the guidance of his conduct, is necessitated to act from his own sense of what is right. This assertion has this day been verified in an application from the relatives and friends of a Hindu woman, for my sanction to the horrid ceremony of burning with her deceased husband. Being impressed with a belief that this savage custom has been prohibited in and about Calcutta, and considering the

same reasons for its discontinuance would probably be held valid throughout the whole extent of the Company's authority, I positively refused my consent. The rites and superstitions of the Hindu religion should be allowed with the most unqualified tolerance, but a practice at which human nature shudders I cannot permit within the limits of my jurisdiction, without particular instructions. I beg, therefore, my Lord, to be informed whether my conduct in this instance meets your approbation.—I am, &c., M. H, Brooke, Collector. Shahabad, 28th Jan., 1789.

Lord Cornwallis's reply informed Mr. Brooke that the Government approved of his refusal to grant the application for permission of the Suttee : but they did "not deem it advisable to authorize him to pervent the observance of it by coercive measures, or by any exertion of his official powers ; as the public prohibition of a ceremony, authorized by the tenets of the religion of the Hindus, and from the observance of which they have never been restricted by the ruling power, would in all probability tend rather to increase than diminish their veneration for it, and consequently prove the means of rendering it more prevalent than it is at present."

Sixteen years later, in January 1805, Mr. J. R. Elphinstone, a magistrate of Zillah Behar, acted in a similar way, forbidding the sacrifice of a young widow of only twelve years old (who was "extremely grateful for my interposition") but as he was "not aware of the existence of any order or regulation to prevent such a barbarous proceeding," and as native prejudices might cause trouble, he wrote to headquarters, requesting definite instructions on the subject. Hereupon Lord Wellesley sent a letter (Feb. 5th, 1805) to the Nizamat Adawlat, the chief judicial authority in India at that time, requesting that court to ascertain the precise amount of sanction given by the Hindu Shastras to the practice of Suttee. The Nizamat sent in its reply in four months (June 5th, 1805), enclosing the opinion of a pandit

and suggesting certain rules for the guidance of Government officials which might slightly restrict the range of the practice. But no such rules were drawn up, and nothing whatever was done for seven years,—a discreditable hiatus, but one which was probably owing, at least in part, to the frequent changes in the personnel of the Government during that period. In 1812, a magistrate of Bundelcund being perplexed as to his duty concerning Suttees, wrote (Aug. 3rd) to the Nizamat Adawlat for instructions: the Nizamat sent his letter to the Governor-General (Lord Moira, afterwards Marquis of Hastings) and after eight months more delay the instructions were at last drawn up and issued, April 17th 1813. Their principle was "to allow the practice in those cases in which it is countenanced by the Hindu religion and law, and to prevent it in others in which it is by the same authority prohibited"—*i.e.* where the woman is unwilling or is under sixteen, or is pregnant, or drugged, or intoxicated. These instructions were afterwards extended (in January 1815) by the important item of prohibiting Suttee when the widow had very young children,- an extension which was brought in by the humane refusal of some magistrates to sanction such sacrifices, and in June 1817 a full and elaborate summary of the whole series of instructions was drawn up by the Government officials. It is quite clear from the various letters and despatches given in the Blue Book that from this time forth the British authorities did really care earnestly about the matter. Regular statistics on the subject were started in 1815, with which date commenced a series of lists of the Suttees performed all over British India, with the details of name, age, caste, &c., of each victim—truly awful records for any Christian Government.

The first four years of these records—1815-1818—form a sort of initial era which is notable for several reasons. The following tables give a sufficient summary of the main facts:—

Division of Calcutta.

Zillahs and Cities.	1815	1816	1817	1818
Burdwan	50	67	98	132
Cuttack and Balasore	9	9	14	11
Hugly	72	51	112	141
Jessore	7	13	21	23
Jungle Mehals ...	34	39	43	61
Midnapur	4	11	7	22
Nuddea	50	56	88	80
Suburbs of Calcutta..	25	40	39	43
24 Pergunnahs ...	2	3	20	31
	253	289	442	544

Division of Dacca.

Zillahs and Cities.	1815	1816	1817	1818
Backergunge ...	1	5	9	1
Chittagong	5	5	6	3
Dacca City	4	6	18	25
Dacca Jelalpur ...	1	1	5	5
Mymensingh ...	...	...	1	1
Sylhet	...	...	...	1
Tipperah	20	7	13	22
	31	24	52	58

Division of Murshedabad.

Zillahs and Cities.	1815	1816	1817	1818
Birbhum	1	3	9	4
Bhagalpur	3	...	2	...
DittoJointatMonghyr	...	...	1	...
Dinajpur	1	4	6	...
DittoJoint at Moldah	...	...	1	1
Murshidabad City...	3	7	7	6
Purnea	2	1	4	1
Rajshahye	...	...	1	2
Rungpur	1	5	11	15
Ditto Joint	...	...	...	1
Maldah	...	1	...	...
	11	21	42	30

Division of Patna.

Zillahs and Cities.	1815	1816	1817	1818
Behar	...	...	...	2
Patna City	2	3	5	3
Ramghur	2	...	2	4
Sarun	12	16	25	23
Shahabad	4	9	14	25
Tirhut	...	1	3	...
	20	29	49	57

Division of Benares.

Zillahs and Cities.	1815	1816	1817	1818
Allahabad	3	2	5	3
Do. Joint atFuttahpur	...	...	1	1
Bundelcund... ...	7	6	5	11
Do. Joint at Calpee	...	...	9	4
Benares City ...	13	12	16	15
Goruckpur	14	23	24	50
Do. Joint atAzimghur	...	...	9	2
Jaunpur	1	3	2	3
Ghazipur	8	15	27	43
Mirzapur	2	4	5	5
	48	65	103	137

Division of Bareilly.

Zillahs and Cities.	1815	1816	1817	1818
Agra	...	1	2	1
Alighur	...	...	2	2
Bareilly Zillah ...	2	1	1	...
Cawnpur	5	4	3	5
Etawah	4	...	3	3
Furruckabad ...	1	...	1	...
Moradabad ...	3	...	...	1
Shaharunpur, S. ...	...	...	1	...
Do., N. ...	...	7	6	1
	15	13	19	13

GENERAL SUMMARY OF SUTTEES FOR 1815 TO 1818.

	1815	1816	1817	1818	TOTAL.
Division of Calcutta ...	253	289	442	544	1528
" Dacca ...	31	24	52	58	165
" Murshidabad	11	21	42	30	104
" Patna ...	20	29	49	57	155
" Benares ...	48	65	103	137	353
" Bareily ...	15	13	19	14	60
	378	441	707	839	2365

Three points in these lists will at once strike the reader's eye: (1) the great variation in the number of Suttees in different localities; (2) the appalling number of those in the Calcutta division, which are nearly double all the rest put together; and (3) the evident increase in the numbers from year to year, not always in detail for each place, but unmistakably in the totals,—the year 1818 giving nearly double the numbers for 1815 in the Dacca division, and more than double in all the others except Bareilly. This alarming increase in the number of Suttees, following so soon on the Government attempts to regulate and check the practice, had greatly discouraged the British authorities even in 1817, and Lord Hastings had consequently stopped the intended publication of the very elaborate set of regulations above referred to, drawn up by the Nizamat Adawlat in September, 1817,—saying that more information was needed before going so far. Soon afterwards the Acting Superintendent of police of the Lower Provinces, Mr. Ewer, issued a circular of queries to the magistrates in his jurisdiction, requesting information on six special points. Their replies are very valuable, and throw much light on the causes of the variations in the statistics.

One of these replies is so important as to deserve special notice. Mr. H. Oakely, a magistrate of Zilla Hughli, writes

(Dec. 19, 1818) saying how earnestly he has sought to discover the reason of the great frequency of Suttees in his district,—which yielded the largest number of victims in the list,—376 in the four years ending with 1818. One cause he finds in the nearness to Calcutta.—"It is notorious (he says) that the natives of Calcutta and its vicinity exceed all others in profligacy and immorality of conduct ;" and while the depraved worship of Kali, "the idol of the drunkard and the thief," is "scarcely to be met with in the distant provinces." it abounds in the metropolis. Elsewhere, "none but the most abandoned will openly confess that he is a follower of Kali. In Calcutta we find few that are not. . . . By such men, a Suttee is not regarded as a religious act, but as a choice entertainment ; and we may fairly conclude that the vicious propensities of the Hindus in the vicinity of Calcutta are a cause of the comparative prevalence of the custom." This view seems to be confirmed by the large number of Suttees in the other districts near Calcutta,—Burdwan (Rammohun's own district) ranking only second to Hughli. But besides this local cause, Mr. Oakely attributes much to another cause of general application, viz. : to the attempts of Government to "regulate" the practice. He says :—

> Previous to 1813, no interference on the part of the police was authorised, and widows were sacrificed, legally or illegally as it might happen ; but the Hindus were then aware that the Government regarded the custom with natural horror, and would do anything short of direct prohibition to discourage and gradually to abolish it. The case is now altered. The police officers are ordered to interfere, for the purpose of ascertaining that the ceremony is performed in conformity with the rules of Shastras ; and in that event, to allow its completion. This is granting the authority of Government for burning widows ; and it can scarcely be a matter of astonishment that the number of sacrifices should be doubled, when the sanction of the ruling power is added to the recommendation of the Shastras.

He ends by saying, "I do not hesitate in offering my opi-

nion that a law for its abolition would only be objected to by the heirs, who derive worldly profit from the custom, Brahmins, who partly exist by it, and by those whose depraved nature leads them to look on so horrid a sacrifice as a highly agreeable and entertaining show; at any rate the sanction of Government should be withdrawn without delay."

Mr. Ewer, summarizing the replies to his circular of inquiry, expressed his agreement with the views of Mr. Oakely and of other magistrates who wrote to the same effect; and finally, the Governor-General reluctantly acquiesced in the inference that the Government action in the matter had really tended to increase instead of to discourage the sacrifices,—and therefore suspended any additional regulations for the time.

Meanwhile two native petitions were sent up to the Governor-General which appeared to tell on the opposite side. They are not mentioned in the Blue Book, and I have only seen the second of them. It is given in full in the *Asiatic Journal* of July 1819, which states that it seems to have been sent up in August, 1818, and that it "was signed by a great number of the most respectable inhabitants of Calcutta." Its immediate occasion was to counteract a petition recently sent up to Government by certain other inhabitants of Calcutta, which had prayed for the repeal of the orders then in force against illegal proceedings in cases of Suttee. The counterpetition challenges the title of the previous supplicants to represent "the principal inhabitants of Calcutta," and warmly endorses the humanity and justice of the aforementioned Government order. In forcible language, some of the chief horrors of the Suttee practice are enumerated. For instance:—

"Your petitioners are fully aware from their own knowledge or from the authority of credible eye-witnesses that cases have frequently occur-

red when women have been induced by the persuasions of their next heirs, interested in their destruction, to burn themselves on the funeral pile of their husband; that others who have been induced by fear to retract a resolution rashly expressed in the first moments of grief, of burning with their deceased husbands have been forced upon the pile and there bound down with ropes, and pressed with green bamboos until consumed with the flames; that some, after flying from the flame, have been carried back by their relations and burnt to death. All these instances, your petitioners humbly submit are murders according to every Shastra, as well as to the common sense of all nations."

In conclusion, these petitioners declare that they "look with the most lively hope to such further measures relative to the custom of burning widows as may justly be expected from the known wisdom, decision, and humanity which have ever distinguished your Lordship's administration."

It is evident that the writer of the above took hold of the regulation system from the side of prohibition, regarding the police interference at "illegal" Suttees as a step towards the final abolition of the practice altogether, and looking to Lord Hastings in the hope of further protection. And no doubt a small number of Suttees was really prevented by the regulation system, as we find by occasional records of such instances in the Blue Books. But the balance on the whole was so enormously on the other side that it is not surprising to find, among the letters of the magistrates and other high class officials consulted, a very large proportion of opinions against the system altogether; and the conviction is often put forth that the practice of Suttee might be abolished by law without any danger to the British rule. Lord Hastings left India on Jan. 1, 1829; but his successor Lord Amherst, wrote with equal humanity on the subject, and concurred in the same policy of standing still until he knew in which direction to move. Perhaps, as a new comer, he may have been additionally cautious in the matter. At any rate, the *impasse* remained for some years more.

And now we come to Rammohun Roy. It was in this eventful year 1818, that his influence in this matter began to be definitely felt.* He used to go down to the Calcutta burning-grounds and try to avert the Suttee sacrifices by earnest persuasion.† Two of such cases have been recorded, one very briefly ;—the other is described in the *Asiatic Journal* for March 1818, which states that the priests were induced to light the pile first, Rammohun having maintained that the Shastra required this, and left it open to the widow to ascend the pile and enter the flames *afterwards* if she chose,—his expectation of course being that she would not so choose. But this case (if it be accurately reported) proved exceptional ; the two widows both fulfilled the Suttee's ideal, and "deliberately walked into" the flames, the younger widow having previously "with great animation, addressed herself to the bystanders in words to this effcct :—'You have just seen my husband's first wife perform the duty incumbent on her, and will now see me follow her example. Henceforward, I pray, do not attempt to prevent Hindu women from burning, otherwise our curse will be upon you."

No record is given of the actual ordeal, which often proved fatal to the fortitude of many Suttees who had dared

* [The efforts of Rammohun Roy to suppress this great social evil commenced at a much earlier date. One of the main causes which drew upon him the anger and persecution of the orthodox Hindu community was his condemnation of Suttee. The widow of his elder brother Jaganmohun became a Suttee on the 8th April, 1810. Raja Rammohun was then at Rungpur and could have heard of the event some time after its occurence. But when he heard of it he took his mother to task for it. His views on the question had been formed and freely expressed long before this. In his early youth he was present at the burning of a widow, and the cruel scene made such a deep impression on him that he resolved never to rest until this inhuman custom were abolished. Edi.]

† [In these efforts he had often to incur the displeasure and insult of the relatives of the Suttee. Edi.]

it, as we have seen with Rammohun's own sister-in-law. But assuming the unbroken courage of the two widows here described, it needs not to be added that such heroism was quite exceptional, as may be seen from the details given in the Calcutta petition, quoted above, as well as from the habit prevalent in Bengal of tying down the victims to prevent their escape.

It was in August, 1818, that this petition was presented to Lord Hastings. How far Rammohun was concerned in it does not appear. It bears traces of his hand, and most likely he wrote a good deal of it,—though there is one paragraph reflecting very harshly on the Mahometans which is so unlike him that it must have come from another source. On the 30th of November following Rammouhun issued an English translation of his first work on the subject; a *Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of, the Practice of Burning Widows Alive.* The brief preface states that the tract is a literal translation of one in Bengali which "has been for several weeks past in extensive circulation in those parts of the country where the practice of widows burning themselves on the pile of their husbands is most prevalent."

A *Second Conference* followed, fourteen months later (Feb. 20, 1820) and was dedicated to Lady Hastings in the following words. "The following tract being a translation of a Bengali essay, published some time ago, as an appeal to reason in behalf of humanity, I take the liberty to dedicate to your Ladyship; for to whose protection can any attempt to promote a benevolent purpose be with so much propriety committed?"

As Rammohun was far too discreet to have published such a dedication without leave from its object, we may conclude that it virtually implied the Governor-General's goodwill to his movement.

These tracts are very characteristic of their author. He

threw his argument into a dramatic form, making the 'Opponent" (of Suttee) quite as good a Hindu as the "Advocate," and ready to admit that "all those passages you have quoted are indeed sacred law, and it is clear from those authorities that if women perform Concremation or Postcremation, they will enjoy heaven for a considerable time" (previously estimated at thirty-five millions of years). But he calmly points out that all this brings Suttee under the category of acts "performed for the sake of gratifications in this world or the next"; which are declared by the highest Hindu authorities to be only of an inferior order of merit. The Katha Upanishad declares that "Faith in God which leads to absorption is one thing; and rites which have future fruition for their object another. Each of these, producing different consequences, holds out to man inducements to follow it. The man who of these two chooses faith, is blessed; and he, who for the sake of reward practices rites, is dashed away from the enjoyment of eternal beatitude." And the author of the Mitakshara decides that "The widow who is not desirous of final beatitude, but who wishes only for a limited term of a small degree of future fruition, is authorized to accompany her husband."

Thus far the abstract argument, of a purely Hindu nature. The "Opponent" then shows that Manu, their great law-giver, expressly enjoyed that the widow should live on as an ascetic, and should "continue till death forgiving all injuries" (a significant hint!), "performing harsh duties, avoiding every sensual pleasure, and cheerfully practising the incomparable rules of virtue which have been followed by such women as were devoted to one only husband." Other high authorities are quoted in confirmation of this view.

By this process of argument the "Opponent" brings the

discussion up to the critical point. The "Advocate" flatly denies that women are capable of true faith or permanent virtue, and avows that they are burned in order to prevent them from going astray after the husband's death. Arrived at this issue, Rammohun drops the dramatic dress and enters upon a thorough defence of women in general and Indian women in particular, which shows how closely he had observed, and how ardently he longed to see them delivered from the miseries of their lot. This defence is so characteristic of himself and of the situation that I give it entire,—but must first call attention to one golden sentence concerning the relative trustworthiness of the two sexes which is, alas! not applicable to India alone.

Women are in general inferior to men in bodily strength and energy; consequently the male part of the community, taking advantage of their corporeal weakness, have denied to them those excellent merits that they are entitled to by nature, and afterwards they are apt to say that women are naturally incapable of acquiring those merits. But if we give the subject consideration, we may easily ascertain whether or not your accusation against them is consistent with justice. As to their inferiority in point of understanding, when did you ever afford them a fair opportunity of exhibiting, their natural capacity? How then can you accuse them of want of understanding? If, after instruction in knowledge and wisdom, a person cannot comprehend or retain what has been taught him, we may consider him as deficient; but as you keep women generally void of education and acquirements, you cannot, therefore, in justice pronounce on their inferiority. On the contrary, Lilavati, Bhanumati, the wife of the prince of Karnat, and that of Kalidas, are celebrated for their thorough knowledge of all the Shastras: moreover in the Vrihadaranyak Upanishad of the Yayur Veda it is clearly stated, that Yagnavalkya imparted divine knowledge of the most difficult nature to his wife Maitreyi, who was able to follow and completely attain it!

Secondly. You charge them with want of resolution, at which I feel exceedingly surprised: for we constantly perceive, in a country where the name of death makes the male shudder, that the female, from her firmness of mind, offers to burn with the corpse of her deceased husband; and yet you accuse those women of deficiency of resolution.

Thirdly. With regard to their trustworthiness, let us look minutely into the conduct of both sexes, and we may be enabled to ascertain which of them is the most frequently guilty of betraying friends. If we enumerate such women in each village or town as have been deceived by men, and such men as have been betrayed by women, I presume that the numbers of the deceived women would be found ten times greater than that of the betrayed men. Men are, in general, able to read and write, and manage public affairs, by which means they easily promulgate such faults as women occasionally commit, but never consider as criminal the misconduct of men towards women. One fault they have, it must be acknowledged, which is, by considering others equally void of duplicity as themselves, to give their confidence too readily, from which they suffer much misery, even so far that some of them are misled to suffer themselves to be burnt to death.

In the fourth place, with respect to their subjection to the passions, this may be judged of by the custom of marriage as to the respective sexes; for one man may marry two or three, sometimes even ten wives and upwards; while a woman, who marries but one husband, desires at his death to follow him, forsaking all worldly enjoyments, or to remain leading the austere life of an ascetic.

Fifthly. The accusation of their want of virtuous knowledge is an injustice. Observe what pain, what slighting, what contempt, and what afflictions their virtue enables them to support! How many Kulin Brahmins are there who marry ten or fifteen wives for the sake of money, that never see the greater number of them after the day of marriage, and visit others only three or four times in the course of their life. Still amongst those women, most, even without seeing or receiving any support from their husbands, living dependent on their fathers or brothers, and suffering much distress, continue to preserve their virtue; and when Brahmins, or those of other tribes, bring their wives to live with them, what misery do the women not suffer? At marriage the wife is recognised as half of her husband, but in after conduct they are treated worse than inferior animals. For the woman is employed to do the work of a slave in the house, such as, in her turn, to clean the place very early in the morning, whether cold or wet, to scour the dishes, to wash the floor, to cook night and day, to prepare and serve food for her husband, father and mother-in-law, brothers-in-law, and friends and connections! (for amongst Hindus more than in other tribes relations long reside together, and on this account quarrels are more common amongst brothers respecting their worldly affairs). If in the preparation or

serving up of the victuals they commit the smallest fault, what insult do they not receive from their husband, their mother-in-law, and the younger brothers of their husband! After all the male part of the family have satisfied themselves, the women content themselves with what may be left, whether sufficient in quantity or not. Where Brahmans or Kayasthas are not wealthy, the women are obliged to attend to their cows, and to prepare cow dung for firing. In the afternoon they fetch water from the river or tank; and at night perform the office of menial servants in making the beds. In case of any fault or omission in the performance of those labours, they receive injurious treatment. Should the husband acquire wealth, he indulges in criminal amours to her perfect knowledge, and almost under her eyes, and does not see her, perhaps once a month. As long as the husband is poor she suffers every kind of trouble, and when he becomes rich she is altogether heart-broken. All this pain and affliction their virtue alone enables them to support. Where a husband takes two or three wives to live with him, they are subjected to mental miseries and constant quarrels. Even this distressed situation they virtuously endure. Sometimes it happens that the husband, from a preference for one of his wives, behaves cruelly to another. Amongst the lower classes, and those even of the better class who have not associated with good company, the wife, on the slightest fault, or even on bare suspicion of her misconduct, is chastised as a thief. Respect to virtue and their reputation generally makes them forgive even this treatment. If, unable to bear such cruel usage, a wife leaves her husband's house to live separately from him, then the influence of the husband with the magisterial authority is generally sufficient to place her again in his hands; when, in revenge for her quitting him, he seizes every pretext to torment her in various ways, and sometimes even puts her privately to death. These are facts occurring every day, and not to be denied. What I lament is, that seeing the women thus dependent and exposed to every misery, you feel for them no compassion that might exempt them from being tied down and burnt to death.

This noble defence may fitly close our record of Rammohun's first regular campaigan. At this point we must leave his controversies on Suttee and Idolatry, to take up other phases of his many-sided activity.

CHAPTER IV.

(1820—1824.)

Regular and Irregular Campaigns against Trinitarian Orthodoxy.

1820.—*Precepts of Jesus* and *Appeal toThe Christian Public* in defence thereof.

1821.—*Second Appeal to the Christian Public.* Mr. Adam's Conversion. Letter of June 21. *Brahmanical Magazine*, I., II., III. Sept.—Calcutta Unitarian Committee formed. Dec. 4—Rammohun starts the *Sambad Kaumudi.*

1882.—(Baisakha) Starts the *Mirat-al-Akhbar.* Publishes *Brief Remarks on Ancient Female Rights.* About this time starts Anglo-Hindu School. Publishes *Answers to Fair Questions.*

1823.—Monthly Meetings. Jan. 30—*Third and Final Appeal to the Christian Public.* April—Memorial against Government Press Order of March 14. May—Letters in Hurkaru. *Ram Dass* papers. Cessation of *Mirat.* June 16—The Raja of Burdwan brings his law suit against Rammohun. Nov. 15—*Brahmanical Magazine*, IV. Nov.—Letter to Lord Amherst. *Humble Suggestions to his Countrymen who believe in One God.* Signs Appeal for Scottish Presbyterian Missionaries. Publishes *Medicine for the Sick.*

1824, Feb. 2.—Letter to Rev. H. Ware on the *Prospects of Christianity.* March 11—*Appeal* for famine in S. India.

We now enter upon a wholly new scene of Rammohun's career,—his relations to Christianity. It may be remembered that in his letter of 1817 to Mr. Digby, he said :—"The consequence of my long and uninterrupted researches into religious truth has been that I have found the doctrines of Christ more conducive to moral principles, and more adapted for the use of rational beings, than any other which have come to my knowledge." With his habitual thoroughness,

he took the trouble to acquire the Greek and Hebrew languages (the latter he learned, it is said, from a Jew, in six months) that he might gain a full understanding of both the Old and the New Testaments ; and the remarkable mastery of their contents which is shown in his later writings bears witness to the success of his study. The result was the publication, in 1820, of his celebrated work entitled *The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness ; extracted from the Books of the New Testament, ascribed to the Four Evangelists. With translations into Sanskrit and Bengali.** As the preface to this book has, I think, been but imperfectly understood, and as it throws important light on the then state of his mind, I give it nearly entire :—

"A conviction in the mind of its total ignorance of the nature and of the specific attributes of the Godhead, and a sense of doubt respecting the real essence of the soul, give rise to feelings of great dissatisfaction with our limited powers, as well as with all human acquirements which fail to inform us on these interesting points.—On the other hand, a notion of the existence of a supreme superintending power, the Author and Preserver of this harmonious system, who has organized and who regulates such an infinity of celestial and terrestrial objects ; and a due estimation of that law which teaches that man should do unto others as he would wish to be done by, reconcile us to human nature, and tend to render our existence agreeable to ourselves and profitable to the rest of mankind. The former of these sources of satisfaction, viz., a belief in God, prevails generally ; being derived either from tradition and instruction, or from an attentive survey of the wonderful skill and contrivance displayed in the works of nature. The latter, although it is partially thought also in every system of religion with which I am acquainted, is principally inculcated by Christianity. This essential characteristic of the Christian religion I was for a long time unable to distinguish as such amidst the various doctrines I found insisted upon in the writings of Christian authors, and in the conversations of those teachers of Christianity with whom I have had the honour of holding communication. Amongst those opinions, the most prevalent seems to be, that no one is entitled to the appellation of Christian who does not believe in the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, as well as in the divine nature of

God, the Father of all created beings. Many allow a much greater latitude to the term Christian, and consider it as comprehending all who acknowledge the Bible to contain the revealed will of God, however they may differ from others in their interpretations of particular passages of scripture; whilst some require from him who claims the title of Christian only an adherence to the doctrines of Christ, as taught by himself, without insisting on implicit confidence in those of the Apostles, as being, except when speaking from inspiration, like other men, liable to mistake and error. That they were so is obvious from the several instances of differences of opinion amongst the Apostles recorded in the Acts and Epistles."

On the relative claims of those different conceptions of Christianity, which had been so extensively and confidently debated, he declines entering into discussion, and continues thus:—

"I confine my attention at present to the task of laying before my fellow creatures the words of Christ, with a translation from the English into Sanskrit and the language of Bengal. I feel persuaded that by separating from the other matters contained in the New Testament the moral precepts found in that book, these will be more likely to produce the desirable effect of improving the hearts and minds of men of different persuasions and degrees of understanding. For, historical and some other passages are liable to the doubts and disputes of freethinkers and anti-Christians, especially miraculous relations, which are much less wonderful than the fabricated tales handed down to the natives of Asia, and consequently could be apt at best to carry little weight with them. On the contrary, moral doctrines, tending evidently to the maintenance of peace and harmony of mankind at large, are beyond the reach of metaphysical perversion, and intelligible alike to the learned and to the unlearned. This simple code of religion and morality is so admirably calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and liberal notions of one God, who has equally subjected all living creatures, without distinction of caste, rank, or wealth, to change, disappointment, pain and death, and has equally admitted all to be partakers of the bountiful mercies which he has lavished over nature, and is also so well fitted to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, to themselves, and to society, that I cannot but hope the best effects from its promulgation in the present form."

From this we may see that the very last thing Rammohun

desired or anticipated for his book was theological controversy. It was that from which he was trying to escape. To him, the "essential chracteristic of the Christian religion" was its ideal humanity, its tendency to promote "the peace and harmony of mankind at large," and to raise them to "high and liberal notions of one God who has equally admitted all to be partakers of (his) bountiful mercies." It was this which he thought would improve the hearts and minds of "men of different persuasions," and in his sanguine soul he could not but "hope the best effects form its promulgation in the present form." What effect his work might have produced on his countrymen if he and they had been able to discuss it together without interruption, can never now be known. For before he had had time to make the translations into Sanskrit and Bengali which he had somewhat prematurely announced on his title page, the book was attacked by the chief missionaries of the day in their periodical *The Friend of India*, and Rammohun was at once immersed in a sea of controversy which lasted for years. A unique opportunity was thus worse than wasted, and made the occasion of increased strife. No doubt all this was providentially overruled for eventual good ; but it is impossible not to regret that the Christians of that day and hour had not been wiser.

Here we must digress a little. At this time (1820) Christianity was very imperfectly represented in Bengal. Henry Martyn was dead, and Reginald Heber had not yet arrived. The bishopric of Calcutta, established in 1814, was occupied by Dr. Middleton, a man of scholarly attainments and plodding industry but of somewhat rigid and unsympathetic temperament. The Church of Scotland was represented by the Rev. Dr. Bryce, a clever and rather liberal-minded man, whose ministry Rammohun attended for some time, but who was so eccentric and indiscreet that he gradually alienated most of his friends, and Rammohun among them. The chief

missionary activity of that time was in the hands of the English Dissenters, especially the celebrated Baptist Mission of Serampore, near Calcutta, under the presidency of Drs. Carey and Marshman. Carey was originally a poor shoemaker, with very little general education, but with a great taste for languages, and an ardent desire to convert the heathen. Marshman was a successful and earnest schoolmaster and a most valuable colleague to the enthusiastic but unpractical Carey. Their joint mission was started in 1799, and they had been working zealously ever since. How soon Rammohun made their acquaintance does not appear, but their "*Periodical Account*" for the year 1816 contains the following notices of him and his doings:—

"Rama-Mohuna-Raya, a very rich Rarhee Brahmun of Calcutta, is a respectable Sanskrit scholar, and so well versed in Persian, that he is called Mouluvee-Rama-Mohuna-Raya: he also writes English with correctness, and reads with ease English Mathematical and metaphysical works. He has published, in Bengalee, one or two philosophical works from the Sanskrit which he hopes may be useful in leading his countrymen to renounce idolatry. Europeans breakfast at his house, at a separate table, in the English fashion; he has paid us a visit at Serampore, and at a late interview, after relating an anecdote of Krishna, relative to a petty theft of this God, he added, 'The sweeper of my house would not do such an act, and can I worship a god sunk lower than the man who washes my floors?' He is at present a simple theist, admires Jesus Christ, but knows not his *need* of the atonement. He has not renounced his caste, and this enables him to visit the richest families of Hindoos. He is said to be very moral; but is pronounced to be a most wicked man by the strict Hindoos."

Of this man Mr. Yates writes thus, in a letter dated August, 1816:—

'I was introduced to him about a year ago: before this, he was not acquainted with any one who cared for his soul. Some time after I introduced Eustace Carey to him, and we have had repeated conversations with him. When I first knew him he would talk only on metaphysical subjects such as the eternity of matter, the nature and qualities of evidence &c. but he has lately become much more humble, and disposed to

converse about the Gospel. He has many relations, Brahmuns, and has established religious worship among them. He maintains the unity of God, and hates all heathen idolatries. He visited Eustace lately and stayed to family prayer, with which he was quite delighted. Eustace gave him Dr. Watt's Hymns; he said he would treasure them up in his heart.* He has been to Serampore once, and has engaged to come and see me in the course of a few weeks. He has offered Eustace a piece of ground for a school."

One might have thought that these worthy men, who expressed such care for Rammohun's soul, would have given some sort of fraternal welcome to his spontaneous recommendation of the teachings of Christ to his countrymen. But unfortunately they belonged to the narrowest school of Calvinistic orthodoxy, and not only held the doctrine of the Atonement in its harshest form, but were so engrossed by it as to regard that alone as "the Gospel." A review of Rammohun's book soon appeared in the *Friend of India*, by a "Christian Missionary,"—Rev. Deocar Schmidt, who feared that the "*Precepts*" might "greatly injure the cause of truth." Dr. Marshman added some editorial comments, in which he spoke of Rammohun as "an intelligent Heathen, whose mind is as yet completely opposed to the *grand design* of the Saviour's becoming incarnate."

All this hurt Rammohun's feelings very much, and he quickly replied with "*An Appeal to the Christian Public in defence of the 'Precepts of Jesus,' by a Friend to Truth*, In this he defended himself with much spirit from the charge of being a "heathen" (which term he regarded as virtually synonymous with an idotator), and claimed to be "a believer in one true and living God," and not only that, but also "in the truths revealed in the Christian system." He proceeds :—

* [That was what Rammohun Roy actually did. He carried the volume with him throughout his life. Shortly after his death Dr. Carpenter stated that "it was a common practice with the Raja, as he went o public worship, to read some of Dr. Watt's Hymns for children." Edl.]

"I should hope neither the Reviewer nor the Editor can be justified in inferring the heathenism of the Compiler, from the facts of his extracting and publishing the moral doctrines of the New Testament, under the title of a "Guide to Peace and Happiness"—his styling the "Precepts of Jesus" a code of Religion and morality,—his believing God to be the Author and Preserver of the Universe,—or his considering those sayings as adapted to regulate the conduct of the whole human race in the discharge of all the duties required of them. . . Although he was born a Brahman he not only renounced idolatry at a very early period of his life, but published at that time a treatise in Arabic and Persian against that system; and no sooner acquired a tolerable knowledge of English than he made his desertion of idol worship known to the Christian world by his English publication—a renunciation that, I am sorry to say, brought severe difficulties upon him, by exciting the displeasure of his parents, and subjecting him to the dislike of his near as well as distant relations, and to the hatred of nearly all his countrymen for several years. I therefore presume that among his declared enemies, who are aware of those facts, no one who has the least pretension to truth, would venture to apply the designation of heathen to him"

He then vigourously defends the principle on which his selection of Precepts was made, and illustrates it by copious and cogent passages from the words of Christ Himself. He recalls the emphasis laid by Christ on the two-fold law of love as that on which hung all the Law and the Prophets; His charge to the rich young man to keep the commandments—"This do and thou shalt live"; and the description of the last Judgment in Matt. xxv., which declares eternal destiny decided by the discharge or neglect of the duties of human beneficence.

"These precepts (he proceeds) separated from the mysterious dogmas and historical records, appear to the Compiler to contain not only the essence of all that is necessary to instruct mankind in their civil duties, but also the best and only means of obtaining the forgiveness of our sins, the favour of God, and strength to overcome our passions and to keep His commandments."

After this he goes on to point out how unsatisfactory have

been the results of the missionary methods of propagating Christianity.

The Compiler, residing in the same spot where European missionary gentlemen and others for a period of upwards of twenty years have been, with a view to promote Christianity, distributing in vain amongst the natives numberless copies of the complete Bible, written in different languages, could not be altogether ignorant of the cause of their disappointment. He, however, never doubted their zeal for the promulgation of Christianity, nor the accuracy of their statement with regard to immense sums of money being annually expended in preparing vast numbers of copies of the Scriptures; but he had seen with regret that they have completely counteracted their own benevolent efforts, by introducing all the dogmas and mysteries taught in Christian Churches to people by no means prepared to receive them; and that they have been so incautious and inconsiderate in their attempts to enlighten the natives of India, as to address their instructions to them in the same way as if they were reasoning with persons brought up in a Christian country, with those dogmatical notions imbibed from their infancy. The consequence has been, that the natives in general, instead of benefiting by the perusal of the Bible, copies of which they always receive gratuitously, exchange them very often for blank paper; and generally use several of the dogmatical terms in their native language as a mark of slight in an irreverent manner; the mention of which is repugnant to my feelings . . . It has been owing to their beginning with the introduction of mysterious dogmas and of relations that at first sight appear incredible, that, notwithstanding every exertion on the part of our divines, I am not aware that we can find a single respectable Moosulman or Hindoo, who was not in want of the common comforts of life, once glorified with the truth of Christianity, constantly adhering to it.

From what I have already stated, I hope no one will infer that I feel ill-disposed towards the Missionary establishments in this country. This is far from being the case. I pray for their augmentation, and that their members may remain in the happy enjoyment of life in a climate so generally inimical to European constitutions; for in proportion to the increase of their number, sobriety, moderations, temperance, and good behaviour, have been diffused among their neighbours as the necessary consequence of their company, conversation, and good example.

A letter written at this time to a friend, Colonel B—— gives Rammohun's own account of the controversy which had been commenced.

Calcutta *September* 5, 1820.

As to the opinion intimated by Sir Samuel J——, respecting the medium course in Christian dogmas, I never have attempted to oppose it. I regret only that the followers of Jesus, in general, should have paid much greater attention to enquiries after his nature than to the observance of his commandments, when we are well aware that no human acquirements can ever discover the nature even of the most common and visible things and moreover, that such inquiries are not enjoined by the divine revelation. On this consideration I have compiled several passages of the New Testament which I thought essential to Christianity, and published them under the designation of *Precepts of Jesus*, at which the Missionaries of Srirampoor [Serampore] have expressed great displeasure, and called me, in their review of the tracts, an injurer of the cause of truth. I was, therefore, under the necessity of defending myself in an "Appeal to the Christian Public," a few copies of which tract I have the pleasure to send you, under the care of Captain S——and entreat your acceptance of them.

I return with my sincere acknowledgments, the work which Sir S. J. was so kind as to lend me. May I request the favour of you to forward it to Sir S. J., as well as a copy of each of the pamphlets, with my best compliments, and to favour me with your and Sir S. J.'s opinion respecting my idea of Christianity, as expressed in those tracts, when an opportunity may occur; as I am always open to conviction and correction?

This appeal elicited certain "Remarks" from Dr. Marshman in the *Friend of India* of May 1820. Dr. Marshman disavows any uncharitable purpose in the use of the word Heathen which, he thinks, "cannot be candidly construed into a term of reproach," but refuses to call Christian anyone who does not accept "the Divinity and Atonement of Jesus Christ, and the Divine Authority of the whole of the Holy Scriptures." Quite conformably to this narrow limitation of the term Christian, he passes on to a singularly negative version of Christianity.

The leading doctrines of the New Testament . . . may be summed up in the two following positions : That God views all sin as so abominable that the death of Jesus Christ alone can expiate its guilt ; and that the human heart is so corrupt that it must be renewed by the Divine Spirit before a man can enter heaven.

In the first number of the quarterly series of the *Friend of India* published in September 1820, the worthy Baptist sets himself to prove this version of his faith from the sayings of Jesus.

To this essay Rammohun replied in a "Second Appeal" published in 1821, nearly six times the length of the first. He repudiates any desire to challenge the credibility of the miracles recorded in the New Testament, or to put them on a level with the marvels of Hindu mythology. He had only recognised the fact that the Hindu mind was as it were sodden with stories of miracles, and he had hoped to direct his countrymen to those precepts of the moral sublimity of which had first moved him to admiration of Christianity. He describes himself by implication as "labouring in the promulgation of Christianity." * He then opposes the main positions advanced by Dr. Marshman. He disputes the consonance with justice of Dr. Marshman's theory of the atonement, but he declares that he has "repeatedly acknowledged Christ as the Redeemer, Mediator, and Intercessor with God on behalf of his followers." He confesses himself moved by his reverence for Christianity and its author to vindicate it from the charge of Polytheism, for he regards Trinitarianism as essentially polytheism. He has little difficulty in disposing of Dr. Marshman's endeavours to prove the doctrine of Trinity from the Old Testament. On the new Testament he resorts to exegetical methods familiar to Unitarians, in

* "By me and by numerous other followers of Christ." The author further speaks of "himself or any other persen labouring in the promulgation of Christianity."

order to establish the impersonality of the Holy Spirit. On the baptismal formula he avers that "it is proper that those who receive" the Christian religion, "should be baptized in the name of the Father, who is the object of worship; of the Son, who is the Mediator; and of that influence by which spiritual blessings are conveyed to mankind, designated in the Scriptures as the Comforter, Spirit of Truth, or Holy Spirit." He makes an excursion into pre-Nicene history and recalls how "in the first and purest ages of Christianity, the followers of Christ entertained" very "different opinions on the subject of the distinction between Father, Son and Holy Spirit" without being excommunicated. The precepts of Jesus, which no other religion can equal much less surpass, do not, he insists, depend on the metaphysical arguments and mysteries with which they have been associated.]*

By this time the controversy had, it will be seen, concentrated itself on two main points, which he thus defines in an "Advertisement" to the "Second Appeal."

"First, that the 'Precepts of Jesus' which teach that love to God is manifested in beneficence towards our fellow-creatures, are a sufficient Guide to Peace and Happiness; and secondly, that omnipresent God, who is the only proper object of religious veneration, is one and undivided in person."

Naturally the last-named point soon became the main question at issue; and as the Unity of God was the main passion of Rammohun's life, he soon threw himself with his whole heart into the contest which was thus so strangely brought home to him from a quite unexpected quarter. At this point,—the beginning of the year 1821,—we must stop to record a singular event which accentuated the controversy in no small degree.

* The passage enclosed in brackets was inserted by the Continuator with Miss Collet's approval

[Rammohun's studies in the Scriptures and interest in the Christian religion had led him into frequent intercourse with English missionaries. He appears in close co-operation with two members of the Baptist Mission at Serampore, Rev. William Yates and Rev. William Adam, both according to Rammohun's testimony "well reputed for their Oriental and classic acquirements." How this came about is related by Mr. Adam in a letter to the committee of the Baptist Missionary society dated June 11, 1821 :—

I have for some time past been engaged with Rammohun Royand Mr. Yates in translating the four Gospels into Bengali. The two translations of Dr. Carey and Mr. Ellerton are declared by Rammohun Roy to abound in the most flagrant violations of native idiom, and he accordingly applied to Mr. Yates and myself for our assistance in translating them anew from the original. This we readily have given. Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount is printed separately at the expense of the B——A—— S——

On September 30, 1822, Mr. Adam writes to Mr. Edward Poole :—

I am at present just finishing a careful revisal of a new translation of the Gospel of St. Matthew in Bengali, originally executed by Rammohun Roy, the Rev. Mr. Yates, and myself. Mr. Yates has since declined his assistance so that it now entirely rests with Rammohun Roy and myself.

The difficulty with Mr. Yates arose when the Revisers began with the fourth Gospel. They got as far as the third verse in safety, but there they struck on the Greek preposition *dia* and the Revision was wrecked. At first Mr. Yates agreed to translate "All things were made *through* him," but by the next session of the Committee he had discovered in the substitution of *through* for *by* a suggestion of Arianism and on the following day withdrew from the enterprise altogether on account of the tendency towards heresy which had transpired. During these discussions, Mr. Adam tells us, Rammohun "sat, pen in hand, in dignified reticence, looking on listening, observing all, but saying nothing." This project and the

manner of its termination naturally drew "heretic" and "heathen" into an intimacy more frequent and confidential, with the result that Mr. Adam finally renounced his belief in the doctrine of Trinity and avowed himself a Unitarian.

The arguments advanced in Rammohun's Second Appeal published about this time may be taken to indicate the kind of consideration which decided Mr. Adam.

This singular event was made public in the latter half of 1821.] *

The story of Mr. Adam's conversion has been told so often and with such frequent inaccuracies that I am glad to be able to produce the following letter in which he communicates the fact to an English friend.

Mr. William Adam to Mr. N. Wright.

Calcutta, *May* 7, 1821.

It is now several months since I began to entertain some doubts respecting the Supreme Deity of Jesus Christ, suggested by frequent discussions with Ram Mohun Roy, whom I was endeavouring to bring over to the belief of that Doctrine, and in which I was joined by Mr. Yates, who also professed to experience difficulties on the subject. Since then I have been diligently engaged in studying afresh the Scriptures with a view to this subject, humbly seeking divine guidance and illumination, and I do not hesitate to confess that I am unable to remove the weighty objections which present themselves against this doctrine. I do not mean to say that there are no difficulties in rejecting it, but the objections against it compared with the arguments for it, appear to me like a mountain compared with a molehill. †

We cannot wonder at the profound impression which this occurrence produced. At anytime the fact of a Christian

* The passage between brackets was inserted by the Continuator with Miss Collet's approval.

† At this point Miss Collet ceased writing. The rest of the work is from the hand of the Continuator. The point at which her revision of his manuscript ended is indicated later.

missionary being converted by "an intelligent heathen" would be sure to excite widespread remark. But in the days when Evangelical orthodoxy enjoyed an almost undisputed ascendancy, and in quarters like those of the Baptist Mission where the tradition of Calvinism stamped the dominant Evangelicalism with its own rigidity,the shock must have been startling in the extreme. The convert was half-humorously, half-savagely, called "The second fallen Adam." The animosity usually harboured by the orthodox against a renegade was rendered doubly bitter by the fact that the converstion was apparently due to the dispassionate examination of the Scriptures by an open-minded Hindu, missionary ardour and Protestant devotion to the Bible being both wounded in their tenderest place. The Unitarians in England and America naturally accepted the intelligence as of a veritable Daniel come to judgment and were shaken, as we shall see by and by, into new missionary enthusiasm.

But the news was not made public property until the latter part of 1821, and before then Rammohun's literary and polemical activity had assumed certain fresh phases. Some explanation of the turn it took is suggested by an incident which occurred about this time.*

Of this Mr. Adam is our informant. According to his narrative,—

"One day in the hot season, about mid-day, I was engaged in my usual studies, when I was informed that a native gentleman was at the gate of my compound and desired to see me. This was an unusual hour

* Bp. Middleton died July 8, 1822. His overtures to Rammohun Roy would most probably take place after *The Precepts of Jesus* came out, which was in the beginning of 1820. The incident occurred, Mr. Adam informs us, during "the hot season." Mr. Adam's statement that "he never afterwards visited the Bishop" implies that a considerable interval elapsed before the Bishop's death. Hence we are safe in concluding that the time of the incident fell in hot season of 1820 or 1821.

for a call. I went to the gate and found that it was Rammohun Roy, whom I instantly requested to alight from his carriage and enter the house. The unusualness of the hour was fully justified by the explanation he gave me. On invitation he had been to see Dr. Middleton, the Bishop of Calcutta. Rammohun Roy's house was probably about two miles from the Bishop's palace and my dwelling was intermediate between the two. He called on me both for refreshment to his body and sympathy in his mental trouble. His first request was that he should be permitted to remove his turban, which was of course granted, and the second that he should have some refreshment, but that before it was brought and he partook of it, my servants should be sent away, since if they had seen him eat under my roof they would have bruited abroad that he had lost caste. This was promptly and quietly attended to, and when he felt cool and refreshed, he proceeded to state what had disturbed his mind.

With much indignation he informed Mr. Adam that the Bishop had sent for him, had entered into a long argument to persuade him to accept of Christianity, and, not content with this singular stretch of the laws of hospitality, had wound up by expatiating on "the grand career which would open to him by a change of faith." "He would be honoured in life and lamented in death,—honoured in England as well as in India;—his name would descend to posterity as that of the modern Apostle of India." The Bishop's meaning was doubtless innocent enough, but the keen truth-loving Hindu seemed to feel it as a modern version of the Tempter's "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." "The sting of the offence was this," reports Mr. Adam: "he was asked to profess the Christian religion, not on the force of evidence, or for the love of truth, or for the satisfaction of his conscience, or for the benefit of his fellow-men, but for the sake of the honour and glory and fame it might bring him. This was utterly abhorrent to Rammohun's mind. It alienated, repelled, and disgusted him." He never met the Bishop again.

As may readily be imagined, and as the foregoing incident

shows, a very warm friendship was springing up between Rammohun and Mr. Adam. The latter, fortunately for us, left on record a great many of their mutual communications in letter and manuscript, which have been placed at the disposal of the writer of this work. His testimony to the impression made upon him by Rammohun's character may be here most properly cited :—

I was never more thoroughly, deeply, and constantly impressed than when in the presence of Rammohun Roy and in friendly and confidential converse with him, that I was in the presence of a man of natural and inherent genius, of powerful understanding, and of determined will, a will determined with singular energy and uncontrollable self-direction, to lofty and generous purposes. He seemed to feel, to think, to speak, to act, as if he could not but do all this, and that he must and do it only in and from and through himself, and that the application of any external influence, distnct from his own strong will, would be the annihilation of his being and identity. He would be free or not be at all. . . . Love of freedom was perhaps the strongest passion of his soul,—freedom not of action merely, but of thought. . . . This tenacity of personal independence, this sensitive jealousy of the slightest approach to an encroachment on his mental freedom was accompanied with a very nice perception of the equal rights of others, even of those who differed most widely from him.*

The effect on such a nature of the attitude assumed to him by organized Christianity in India can be readily conceived. A Brahman by birth, he had commended to his own countrymen the Precepts of Jesus as surpassing those of any other religion as a guide to peace and happiness, and he had undertaken to help in translating the whole of the four Gospels into Bengali. As a result he had been assailed by the Baptist editor, he had been forsaken by one of his Baptist co-translators whose orthodoxy deterred him from making a correct version ; and by the Anglican Bishop, he had been, as he understood, offered

* "A lecture on the Life and Labours of Rammohun Roy," by W. Adam. Calcutta : Roy & Co., 1879. pp. 22-25.

the bribe of world-wide fame, to induce him to accept Christianity. Such an experience of English Christianity in its Established and Nonconforming phases was not likely to conciliate Rammohun Roy. We can scarcely wonder that the latter half of 1821 witnessed a vigorous polemic on his part against the tactics of Christian missionaries.

The *Sumachar Dúrpun*, a periodical issued from the Mission Press at Serampore, came out on the 14th of July with an onslaught on the pantheism of the *Vedanta Shastra*, arguing that while inconsistent with polytheism it logically destroyed the reality of the universe and the responsibility of the human soul, as well as the perfectness of God. It also invited replies. But on Rammohun taking the missionaries at their word and sending a reply, they, with a lack of fairness and indeed with a stupidity which was simply fatuous, refused to insert it. Rammohun accordingly brought out under the name of his pandit, Shivuprusad Surma, *The Brahmunical Magazine*, as "a vindication of the Hindu religion against the attacks of Christian missionaries." The first two numbers contain the provocative article reprinted from the *Sumachar Durpun* and the suppressed reply. Rammohun is at great pains to represent the Vedantic system as more of a monotheism than a pantheism. He firmly avers that God is the creator of the world, but grants that matter is eternal. "We find the phrases 'God is all and in all,' in the Christian books; and I do not suppose they mean by such words that pots, mats, &c. are gods. I am inclined to believe that by these terms they mean the omnipresence of God." Similar language in the Vedant could be similarly explained. Polytheism he represents as only an accommodation to the ignorance of the unenlightened, and he cites by way of retort the anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament and the human experiences of the Eternal Son. Does not the New Testament tell us, he asks in effect, of One God begetting another, and of the former taking the shape of a

Dove, the latter appearing as Man ? Similar stories in their own religion Hindu philosophers regard as fictions meant only "to engage the minds of persons of weak understanding." But the missionaries insist that the incarnations in Dove and Man are real. A reply in the *Friend of India*, No. 38, led to a vigorous rejoinder in the third number of the *Brahmunical Magazine*. Rammohun here directs his attack on the doctrine of Trinity. He discards Trinity in Unity as an inconceivable idea, and charging Trinitarians with Tritheism he pronounces them polytheists. In answer to aspersions on Hindu morals, he suggests that the domestic life of Europeans might not compare favourably with that of Hindus. He concludes with a pious dignity which admirably contrasts with the tone of his opponent. The Editor had had the impious effrontery to declare that Hinduism evidently owed its origin to the Father of Lies alone. "Shivuprusad Surma" makes answer, "we must recollect that we have engaged in solemn religious controversy and not in retorting abuse against each other."

In these pseudonymous articles, Rammohun writes, it will be observed, as a devout and aggrieved adherent of Hinduism. His preface to the first number of the *Magazine* makes complaint of Christian missions in India as constituting a departure from the promise of the British authorities not to interfere with the religion of their subjects, and as taking an undue advantage of the fact that Christianity is the religion of the conqueror. He suggests, in effect, that "the superiority of the Christian religion" should not be advocated "by means of abuse and insult, or by affording the hope of worldly gain," but "by force of argument alone." His protest against the religious insolence which proclaimed the whole of the wonderful development of Indian faith, from the Rig Veda down to Rammohun Roy himself, as solely of Satanic origin, was timely and well-deserved ; and his hostility to Christianity as then instituted

compatible with his previously expressed ... Founder and for his real religion.

It is . ... ing to turn for a moment from these theological wranglings to get a glimpse of Rammohun's cosmopolitan sympathies in the political sphere. When the intelligence reached India that the people of Naples after extorting a Constitution from their despotic King were crushed back into servitude by the Austrian troops, in obedience to the joint mandate of the crowned heads of Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sardinia, and Naples, Rammohun felt it keenly. In a letter to Mr. Buckingham, of date August 11, 1821, he declares himself much "depressed by the late news from Europe." "From the late unhappy news" he goes on,

> I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, especially those that are European Colonies, possessed of a greater degree of the same blessing than what they now enjoy.
>
> Under these circumstances I consider the cause of the Neapolitans as my own, and their enemies as ours. Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been, and never will be ultimately successful.

These noble words reveal how profoundly Rammohun felt with the late Russell Lowell that "In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim" ; and that

> Wherever wrong is done
> To the humblest and the weakest', neath the all-beholding Sun
> That wrong is also done to us.

In September, 1821, the Calcutta Unitarian Committee was originated. *

* "The Committee was formed in September, 1821," says Mr. William Adam in a letter under date of June 26, 1827, to Mr. R. Dutton, "and its present members are Theodore Dickens, a barrister of the Supreme Court, George James Gordon, a merchant of the firm of Mackintosh & Co., William Tate, an attorney, B. W. Macleod, a surgeon in the Company's service, Norman Kerr, an uncovenanted servant of the Company, Rammohun Roy, Dwarkanath Thakoor, Prusunnu Coomar Thakoor, Radhaprusad Roy, and myself. It will be observed that nearly all the European names are Scottish

It was composed of a few native gentlemen among whom Rammohun was leader, and several Europeans, civilians and others, including Mr. Adam, whose conversion had just been announced. "Proselytism," Mr. Adam explains, "is not our immediate object. We aim to remove ignorance and superstition, and to furnish information respecting the evidences, the duties, and the doctrines of the religion of Christ." The methods chosen were "education, rational discussion, and the publication of books both in English and in the native languages."* In January, 1822, Mr. Adam writes that he has with the assistance of a few friends rented a house in which Christian worship is regularly conducted. "Rammohun Roy is one of the warmest of our supporters." As we shall see presently, the Anglo-Hindu school, commenced under the auspices of this Committee, was almost exclusively supported by Rammohun. The "Unitarian press" was entirely his property. Mr. Adam, in his new *rôle* of Unitarian minister, seems to have depended for his financial support chiefly on Rammohun's bounty. So that the whole organization was principally in Rammohun's hands. We may regard the formation of this Unitarian Committee as a distinct and an important stage in his career as founder.

This avowed and organized connetion with Unitarian Christianity led Rammohun into correspondence with several of its votaries in England and America. On October 27, 1822, we find him writing to "a gentleman of Baltimore,"

I have now every reason to hope that the truths of Christianity will not be much longer kept hidden under the veil of heathen doctrines and practices, gradually inlroduced among the followers of Christ, since many lovers of truth are zealously engaged in rendering the religion of Jesus free from corruptions. . . .

It is . . . a great satisfaction to my conscience to find that the doctrines inculcated by Jesus and his Apostles are quite different from those human inventions wich the missionaries are persuaded to profess, and entirely consistent with reason and the revelation delivered by Moses and the prophets. I am, therefore, anxious to support them, even at the risk

* The letter of Mr. Adam to Mr. R. Dutton.

of my own life. I rely much on the force of truth, which will, I am sure, ultimately prevail. Our number is comparatively small, but I am glad to inform you that none of them can be justly charged with the want of zeal and prudence.

I wish to add, in order that you may set me right, if you find me mistaken,—my view of Christianity is that in representing all mankind as the children of one eternal Father, it enjoins them to love one another, without making any distinction of country, caste, colour, or creed; notwithstanding they may be justified in the sight of the Creator in manifesting their respect towards each other, according to the propriety of their actions and the reasonableness of their religious opinions and differences.

Writing to the same gentleman a few months later,—on December 9, 1822,—he declares,

Although our adversaries are both numerous and zealous, as the adversaries of truth always have been, yet our prospects are by no means discouraging, if we only have the means of following up what has already been done.

We confidently hope that, through these various means, the period will be accelerated, when the belief in the Divine Unity and in the mission of Christ will universally prevail.

These avowals, of readiness to support the doctrines of Christ even at the resk of his life, and of hope in the ultimate universality of faith in the mission of Christ, naturally led to the impression that Rammohun wss to all intents and purposes a Unitarian Christian.

Despite his hopefulness of its eventual success, the Unitarian movement seems to have very speedily received a decided rebuff. For, six months later,—July 2, 1823,—Rammohun writes to Mr. Samuel Smith, "From the disappointment which we have met in our endeavour to promote the cause of Unitarianism, I scarcely entertain any hope of success." On the 4th of August following, Mr. Buckingham writes of Rammohun's exertions, "He has done all this to the great detriment of his private interests, being rewarded by the coldness and jealousy of all the great functionaries of Church and State in India, and supporting the Unitarian Chapel, the Unitarian Press,

and the expense of his own publications . . . out of a private fortune of which he devotes more than one-third to acts of the purest philanthropy and benevolence."

His controversy with the missionaries was kindled afresh in the quraterly *Friend of india* which appeared in December, 1821. The editor, Rev. Dr. Marshman, devoted 128 closely printed pages to an attempted refutation of Rammohun's *Second Appeal to the Christian Public.* His arguments are directed to the defence of the old Evangelical doctrines of Atonement and of the Deity of Christ with the consequent doctrine of Trinity. He lays the whole of the Scriptures, Old as well as New Testament, under contribution for proof texts of those dogmas, with a disregard of the laws of historical exegesis which even to the orthodoxy of to-day is bewildering. Dogmas which did not actually emerge until, at the earliest, in the beginning of the Christian era, are proved by passages in the Pentateuch, in the Psalms and in the Prophets. One example may suffice : "In Psalm xlv.," avers the learned Editor, "we have the Eternal Deity of the Son fully revealed." Evangelical religion has its answer to Rammohun's objections, but its exponents in India were not then aware how much must be conceded to the modern critical spirit before that answer can be effectively made. But Dr. Marshman sinned against higher than merely critical canons. Because the reverent Hindu impugns the Baptist's conception of the Supreme Being who they both adore, Dr. Marshman accuses him of "arraigning his Maker of gross injustice" and of "charging Him with having founded all the religion of the patriarchs and prophets, of the apostles and primitive saints, of the blessed in Heaven throughout eternity, on an act of palpable iniquity." And of this Hindu Theist he dares to ejaculate, "May his eyes be opened ere it be for ever too late !"

On the 30th of January, 1823, Rammohun issued his rejoinder. The ***Final Appeal to the Christian Public in Defence of the***

Precepts of Jesus is a voluminous document. His four pages of mild and inoffensive preface to *The Precepts of Jesus* had evoked such extensive criticism as to draw from him a first "Appeal in Defence" of 20 pages, a "Second Appeal" of 150 pages, and now a "Third and Final Appeal" of 256 octavo pages *

The last work bears evidence of the unfortunate change of attitude into which the missionaries suffered themselves to be betrayed by the progress of this polemic. It announces that while all the previous works of the author on the subject of Christianity had been printed at the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, the acting proprietor had, after the Second Appeal appeared, declined—"although in the politest manner possible"—to print any other production of Rammohun on the same subject. Rammohun was therefore obliged to purchase his own type and to rely on native superintendence. The title page declares the work "Printed at the Unitarian Press, Dhurmtollah, Calcutta."† "I am well aware," says Rammohun in his preface, "that this difference of sentiment has already occasioned much coolness towards me in the demeanour of some whose friendship I hold very dear." But his devotion to the truth of Monotheism which he held to be not less imperilled by Christian Trinitarianism than by Hindu polytheism, left him no option but to pursue the controversy.

The "Final Appeal" controverts Dr. Marshman's arguments and Scriptural "proofs" step by step ; first as dealing with the Atonement, and next with the Trinity. Into the windings of this devious disputation we need not wander. Suffice it to say

* As reprinted in Rammohun's *English Works* edited by Eshan Chunder Bose, Oriental Press, Calcutta, 1885.

† "There is a Unitarian press, also the property of Rammohun Roy, at which several pamphlets and tracts have been and continue to be printed, almost all bearing on the Unitarian controversy or tending to promote philanthropic objects." Letter of Mr. Wm. Adam, July 27 1816.

that, while the methods of exposition of the Hindu are more modern than those of his Christian opponent, many of his exegetical expedients are more apt to amuse than to convince a theologian of the present day. Yet the acquaintance which he shows with Hebrew and Greek and with expository literature is, considering his antecedents, little less than marvellous. It is interesting to observe that he rebuts Dr. Marshman's appeal to the authority of interpretative tradition by a reminder of the position of the first Protestants in face of the unbroken Catholic tradition; and the charge of imputing iniquity to his Maker he courteously and even with a sense of pain retorts upon his critic. It is also interesting to place beside his anonymous or pseudonymous defence of Hinduism, this question which appears in the preface above his own proper signature:—

Could Hinduism continue after the present generation, or bear the studious examination of a single year, if the belief of their idols being endued with animation were not carefully impressed on the young before they come to years of understanding?

His objection to Dr. Marshman "condemning those whose sentiments as to the person of Jesus Christ are precisely the same" as Newton's and Locke's, is significant, for he goes on to describe these "sentiments"—which we may perhaps infer that he himself holds—thus,—"that He is the anointed Lord and King promised and sent from God" and "is worthy of worship for his mediation and meritorious death, but by no means . . perfect God and perfect Man."

Not content with this bulky "Final Appeal," Rammohun proposed in the preface to start in the following April a monthly magazine "to be devoted to Biblical criticism and to subject Unitarian as well as Trinitarian doctrines to the test of fair argument." "If any one of the missionary gentlemen, for himself and in behalf of his fellow-labourers, would send an essay in defence of their distinctive tents, Rammohun

would publish the same at his own expense. This proffer led to a curious controversy. A certain fiery doctor of medicine, R. Tytler by name, considered it "a general challenge to all Christians who profess a belief in the divinity of Christ," and accordingly he offered to meet Rammohun in either public or private disputation. Rammohun replied pointing out that what he had asked for was literary discussion, and declaring his willingness to examine any arguments which Dr. Tytler might commit to writing on behalf of the doctrine of Trinity, provided they were sent "by a missionary gentlemen under his signature." The sagacious Hindu was not going to be drawn from his quest after sober and temperate theological controversy by the truculent polemic of an irresponsible layman. The layman thereupon writes to the Bengal *Hurkaru*, April 40, 1823, in a towering passion, charging this Unitarian Goliath with shrinking from the conflict to which he had challenged the hosts of Israel, so soon as the first layman appeared against him. He is especially indignant at the idea of his being required to secure the warrant of a missionary's signature to his lucubrations, as if *he* were going to turn Anabaptist! Whence it appears that the irate doctor did not love the Baptist persuasion. Rammohun Roy replied under date May 1st, quoting the precise words of his challenge and indicating the doctor's non-compliance with the specified terms. To a more courteous proffer of literary battle from an anonymous correspondent, Rammohun, on May 3rd, answered, reasonably enough, that he did not engage to encounter all professors of the Trinity "of whatever rank or situation, character or peculiar state of mind," but with accredited theologians only.

But for dealing with amateur theologians of the minatory order, he had methods of his own. He would answer a fool according to his folly. In the *Hurkaru* of May 3rd Dr. Tytler explodes with indignation at Rammohun's informing

him of his entire indifference whether a man professed belief as a Christian in the divinity of Christ or of "any other mortal man," or as a Hindu in the divinity of Thakur Trata Ram or Munu. The idea of putting Christian theology on a level with Hindu mythology drove the doctor into a frenzy of italics, capitals, large capitals and notes of exclamation. Rammohun adopted in reply an artifice as innocent in its transparency as it was pungent in its satire. He wrote under the assumed name of Ram Doss and under the assured profession of Hindu orthodoxy, to propose to Dr. Tytler a joint crusade against "the abominable notion of a single God" advocated by Rammohun Roy and others. He argues that Christian and Hindu orthodoxy rested on the common basis, the manifestation of God in the flesh, and drew a parallel between the incarnations of Ram and of Christ. Trinity in Unity on the one side and on the other the 330,000,000 of persons in the Hindu Godhead were equally matters of faith, inscrutable to reason. This covert satire stung the pugnacious doctor into styling Ram Doss "the wretched tool" of "the damnable heresy of Unitarianism" which was the same as Hindu idolatry and like it proceeded from the Devil. He signed this effusion characteristically "Your inveterate and determined foe in the Lord." Dr. Tytler's qualifications for controversy may be further seen in his assertion that "there is no book at present in possession of Hindus of higher antiquity than the entrance of the Mussulmans into India," and that "the histories of Buddha, Saluvahana and Chrishna comprise nothing more than perverted copies of Christianity." The correspondence which went on for the most of the month of May was published in pamphlet form under the title: *A Vindication of the Incarnation of Deity as the common basis of Hinduism and Christianity against the schismatic attacks of R. Tytler, Esq., M.D.*, by Ram Doss."

Possibly to the same time belongs *A Dialogue between a Missionary and Three Chinese Converts*, which is published in the *English Works* of the Rajah. This little tract is written with the desire of making out that the impression produced on Chinese minds by the teaching of three Gods who are one God and One of whom died, is bewildering and ridiculous.

On November 15 in the same year appeared the fourth and last number of the *Brahmunical Magazine*. The cover of the pseudonym Shivuprusad Surma is further kept up by an opening explanation that in default of reply from Rammohun Roy to the missionary attacks upon the Vedant system this magazine had been published. This artifice of self-multiplication and self-concealment by aid of pseudonyms certainly savours more of the journalist than of the national religious reformer; but, however we may explain it, Rammohun seems to have had quite a liking for such tactics. The *Magazine* is occupied first with a defence of the Vedantic system and then with an onslaught on the doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement. The writer greatly enjoys himself in putting together ten different versions of the Trinity presented by English divines, from the Sabellian view of Dr. Wallis to the explanation of the newly-arrived Bishop Heber of Calcutta that the second and third persons in the Trinity are simply the Angels Michael and Gabriel! He suggests that so various and contradictory a creed is scarcely likely to make many converts. He concludes by laying down "for the information of the missionary gentlemen," "our religious creed," which we may probably regard as the faith of the real author :—

"In conformity with the precepts of our ancient religion, contained in the Holy Vedant, though disregarded by the generality of the moderns, we look up to ONE BEING as the animating and regulating principle of the whole collective body of the universe, and as the origin of all individual souls, which in a manner somewhat similar vivify and govern

their particular bodies; and we reject idolatry in every form and under whatsoever veil of shophistry it may be practised, either in adoration of an artificial, a natural, or an imaginary object. The divine homage which we offer consists solely in the practice of *Daya*, or benevolence towards each other, and not in a fanciful faith, or in certain motions of the feet, arms, head, tongue, or other bodily organs, in a pulpit or before a temple."

In 1823, and possibly as a sort of practical conclusion to the course of controversy, Rammohun issued a short tract entitled *Humble Suggestions to his countrymen who believe in the One True God.* It is stated to be "by Prusunnu Koomar Thakoor." As his editor, Jogendra Chunder Ghose, remarks at this point, "The Raja was fond of writing anonymously and of giving the names of others to his own works." This "advertisement" is prefixed.

My object in publishing this tract is to recommend those to whom it is addressed to avoid using harsh or abusive language in their intercourse with European missionaries, either respecting them or their objects of worship, however much this may be countenanced by the example of some of these gentlemen.

This is the tract:—

Those who firmly believe on the authority of the Veds that "God is One *only*, without an equal," and that "He cannot be known either through the medium of language, thought or vision: how can he be known except as existing, *the origin and support of the Universe*?"—and who endeavour to regulate their conduct by the following precept, "He who is desirous of eternal happiness should regard another as he regards himself, and the happiness and misery of another as his own," ought to manifest the warmest affection towards such of their own countrymen as maintain the same faith and practice, even although they have not all studied the Veds for themselves, but have professed a belief in God only through an acquaintance with their general design. Many among the ten classes of Sunnyasees, and all the followers of Gooroo Nanuk, of Dadoo, and of Kubeer, as well as of Suntu, &c., profess the religious sentiments above mentioned. It is our unquestionable duty invariably to treat them as brethren. No doubt should be entertained of their future salvation, merely because they receive instructions, and practise their sacred music in the Vernacular dialect. For Yajnavalkya,

with a reference to those who cannot sing the hymns of the Veds, has said "The divine hymns, *Rik*, *Gatha*, *Panika*, and *Dukshubihita* should be sung ; because by their constant use man attains supreme beatitude". "He who is skilled in playing on the lute (veena), who is intimately acquainted with the various tones and harmonies and who is able to beat time in music, will enter without difficulty upon the road of salvation." Again the Shivu Dhurmu as quoted by Rughoonundun, says, "He is reputed a Gooroo who according to the capacity of his disciple instructs him in Sanskrit whether pure or corrupt, in the current language of the country, or by any other means."

Amongst foreigners, those Europeans who believe God to be in every sense ONE, and worship Him alone in Spirit, and who extend their benevolence to man as the highest service to God, should be regarded by us with affection, on the ground of the object of their worship being the same as ours. We should feel no reluctance to co-operate with them in religious matters, merely because they consider Jesus Christ as the Messenger of God and their spiritual teacher ; for oneness in the object of worship and sameness of religious practice should produce attachment between the worshippers.

Amongst Europeans, those who believe Jesus Christ to be God himself, and conceive him to be possessed of a particular form, and maintain Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be one God, should not be treated in an unfriendly manner. On the contrary, we should act towards them in the same manner as we act towards those of our countrymen who without forming any external image meditate upon Ram and other supposed incarnations and believe in their unity.

Again, those amongst Europeans who believing Jesus Christ to be the Supreme Being, moreover construct various images of him, should not be hated. On the contrary, it becomes us to act towards those Europeans in the same manner as we act towards such as believe Ram, &c., to be incarnations of God and form external images of them. For, the two last mentioned sects of foreigners are one and the same with those of the two similar sects among Hindoos although they are clothed in a different garb.

When any belonging to the second and third classes of Europeans endeavour to make converts of us, the believers in the only living and true God, even then we should feel no resentment towards them, but rather compassion, on account of their blindness to the errors into which they themselves have fallen. Since it is almost impossible, as

every day's experience teaches us, for men when possessed of wealth and power, to perceive their own defects.

So terminated Rammohun's polemic against the Trinitarian missionaries. But, even while that was in full course, he was involved in repelling attacks from an entirely opposite quarter. A defender of the conventional Hindu faith, who styled himself an "Establisher of Religion," brought out a *brochure* in Bengali, entitled "Four Questions," which was manifestly levelled at the reformer and his associates. From Rammohun's reply in the same language, which appeared in 1822 (20th of Magh, 1229, Bengali era), and which was entitled "Answers to Four Questions," we gather the chief points at issue between him and his orthodox fellow countrymen. The style of both combatants is indirect, allusive, sinuous; with many covert personal references which are now scarcely intelligible, but all wrapped round the main point, which was—Had the reformers put themselves outside the pale of Hinduism? The first question ran thus—

Do these professors of knowledge and their childish followers, having examined the mysteries of the Shastras, wish to give up their own religion and adopt that of foreigners? Is it proper, according to the Shastras, for gentlemen to associate with such good-intentioned people?

In other words, ought not Rammohun and his accomplices to be boycotted as renegades? Rammohun retorts with a *tu quoque.* The "practiser of religion," as he calls his pragmatic rite-observing opponent, failed just as much as "the inquirer into religion" to practise a millionth part of what the minute rules of Hinduism required. "The practiser," with his father and grandfather, had served men of an alien faith, had used Mahometan tooth-powder and perfumes, had studied Mahometan lore with Mahometans, had instructed men of an alien faith in his own Shastras. These things were as much violations of strict Hindu law as any ritual offence charged to "the inquirer."

The second question inquires whether the religion of those who oppose native manners and customs, who ignorantly claim to know God, and who wear the Sacred Thread without affection, is not as the religion of the tiger and the cat? Reply is made by enquiring whether "the establisher" observes the native customs of the Vaïsnavs, who eat no fish. Does he follow all the usages of his own sect? If not, does he perfrom the requisite penance? An effective contrast is drawn between the man who outwardly appears to fulfil the strictest prescriptions of his religion, but at home eats fish and abuses everyone; and the man who makes no pretences but holds to the saying of Maha Nirban, "the eternal religion consists in the knowledge of God and the performance of those practices most beneficial to man."

The third question asks what religion sanctions the taking of life by a Brahman, and scornfully enquires as to the fate in this and in the next world of "merciful searchers into knowledge," who daily cause kids to be killed for their table. The answer affirms that according to the Shastras "it is not a sin to eat flesh that has been offered to Gods and to ancestors." But if the eating of animal food incur the punishment of hell, does not the Establisher himself eat fish?

The fourth question asks what must be done with "certain well-known persons" who "throw off fear of religion and of public opinion, cut their hair, drink wine and consort with infidels." It is answered that the Shastras forbid only "*vain* cutting of the hair," and enjoin the drinking of consecrated wine. Critics are significantly reminded that Brahmans who consort with the Mahometan wives of their own servants and with Chandal courtezans ought properly to forfeit their Brahmanhood.

These pungent replies called forth a rejoinder of more than two hundred pages from "the Establisher of religion." This brought Rammohun again into the field. In 1823 (12th

of Pous, 1230, Bengali era) he published his *Pathya Pradana* ("Medicine for the Sick"). Its preface describes the last work of his opponent—whom he calls henceforth not the establisher but "the destroyer of religion"—as merely one long tirade of abuse. Rammohun declines to retaliate, remarking that in giving medicine to boys that are sick the physician does not lose his temper over their kicks and screams. The "Medicine" he administers is compounded from the Shastras. In giving it, he rebuts false interpretations put upon his former answers.

The controversy was thus, it appears, analogous to that between the "tithing of mint and anise and cumin," and "the weightier matters of the law." Against the Rabbinism of the Hindu religion, Rammohun appealed to its Prophetism.

On the 16th of June in this year (1823), Rammohun, who had emerged successfully from the proceedings instituted against him by his nephew some three years previously, was drawn once more into the law courts. The Rajah of Burdwan sued him for Rs. 15,002, being principal and interest on a bond for Rs. 7,501, which was given by Rammohun's father for arrears of land revenue, and which fell due so far back as 1797. Rammohun's defence was (1) that having been disinherited by his father he could not be held to have inherited his father's debts; (2) that no demand for payment had been made during his father's life-time or since until now, and (3) that a debt not claimed for twelve years ceased to be legally binding. He argued that the action was brought out of malice, with a desire to ruin him, because Rammohun's son-in-law, Dewan to the plaintiff's son lately deceased, had acted as vakeel for the widowed Ranees and extorted from the Rajah what was legally, though not customarily, their due. For this exacting vindication of widows' rights, the Rajah naturally blamed Rammohun, and relying on his immense wealth was bent on breaking him. The proceedings now begun lasted over more than eight years.

Defeated in the Provincial Court of Calcutta, the Rajah appealed to the higher tribunal—the Sudder Dewanee Adaulut—and the judicial decision which finally worsted him was not pronounced until Nov. 10, 1831.

It is a remarkable commentary on the many-sidedness and elastic sympathy of Rammohun's character that just at the time when he was anonymously satirizing or loftily compassionating the propaganda of Trinitarian Christians, we find him avowing attendance on a Presbyterian Church and giving his name and countenance to a petition for the despatch of Presbyterian missionaries to India. To Rammohun we may trace some share in the origination of Alexander Duff's great missionary work.* Dr. Bryce, Church of Scotland Chaplain in Calcutta, declared himself disabused by Rammohun Roy of Abbe Dubois' opinion that no Hindu could be made a true Christian ; and, to quote Dr. Bryce's own words,

> "Encourged by the approbation of Rammohun I presented to the General Assembly of 1824 the petition and memorial which first directed the attention of the Church of Scotland to British India as a field for missionary exertions, on the plan that is now so successfully following out, and to which this eminently gifted scholar, himself a Brahmin of high caste, had specially annexed his sanction."

On the 8th December 1823—within less than a month of the appearance of the *Brahmunical Magazine*, No. iv—Rammohun added this written testimony to the minute of St. Andrew's Kirk Session on the proposal mentioned by Dr. Bryce :—

> As I have the honour of being a member of the Congregation meeting in St. Andrew's Church (although not fully concurring in every article of the Westminster Confession of Faith), I feel happy to have an opportunity of expressing my opinion that, if the prayer of the memorial

* For following incidents see Dr. George Smith's *Life of Alexander Duff*, Vol. I, pp. 39, 40.

is complied with there is a fair and reasonable prospect of this measure proving conducive to the diffusion of religious and moral knowledge in India."

The parenthesis disclaiming *complete* concurrence with the Presbyterian creed, coming as it does from "Ram Doss," seems to carry with it a flavour of fine irony; but its mildness of statement was probably due only to the Rajah's exceeding urbanity. Rammohun's active assistance of Duff's earliest efforts will be noticed later. Scotsmen will doubtless regard it as a compliment to their national type of religion that while this cultured Theist was horrified by the overtures of the Anglican bishop and was antagonized by the Baptist editors, he was induced to beg for the presence in his country of Scottish Presbyterian missionaries.

But his sympathies most naturally lay with the suggestion which had been elicited, on his work becoming known in England and America, of starting a Unitarian propaganda in India. In 1823 Rev. Henry Ware, Unitarian minister of Harvard College, Cambridge, United States, addressed a number of questions to Rammohun on "The prospects of Christianity and the means of promoting its reception in India." Rammohun, in a letter dated February 2, 1824, explains that his delay in replying was due to his engrossing "controversies with polytheists both of the West and East." Before proceeding to answer *seriatim* the questions presented, he remarks:—

> There is one question . . . (to wit "Whether it be desirable that the inhabitants of India should be converted to Christianity" . . .) which I pause to answer, as I am led to believe, from reason, what is set forth in Scripture, that "In every nation he that *feareth* God and worketh *righteousness* is accepted with him," in whatever form of worship he may have been taught to glorify God. Nevertheless I presume to think that Christianity, if properly inculcated, has a greater tendency to improve the moral, social, and political state of mankind than any other known religious system.

He expresses his delight that so great a body of the American people "have engaged in purifying the religion of Christ from those absurd idolatrous doctrines and practices, with which the Greek, Roman, and Barbarian converts to Christianity have mingled it from time to time." Able friends of truth, he adds, have made similar efforts in England, but there they have against them the power and revenues of the Established Church. In America they had to fight "only prejudice unarmed with wealth or power." He concludes with a reference to the political future of the United States which reveals the wide outlook and sympathy of the man. He was writing shortly after the Missouri compromise (1821) had relaxed the first great tension between the "free" North and the slave-holding South; and these are his words :—

> I presume to say that no native of these States can be more fervent than myself in praying for the uninterrupted happiness of your country and for what I cannot but deem essential to its prosperity——the perpetual union of all the States under one general government.

He goes on to amplify his desire for the maintenance of Federal unity. He then deals with the string of questions propounded. On the number and quality of converts he speaks guardedly, but leaves the impression that there are no converts save a very few of low caste or none, ignorant, and influenced by mercenary motives. He quotes Abbe Dubois as a greater authority than himself, who said that it was impossible to convert a Hindu to Christianity. The chief causes assigned by him for the slow advance of Christinity in India are the reliance of the natives on their sacred books, their early prejudices, their dread of losing caste, and the fact that "the doctrines which the missionaries maintain and preach are less conformable with reason than those professed by Moosulmans and in several points are equally absurd with the popular Hindu creed." From this last drawback alone was the pro-

mulgation of Unitarian Christianity exempt. The sincere conversion of the few enlightened Hindus to Trinitarian Christianity is "morally impossible," but "they would not scruple to embrace or at least to encourage, the Unitarian system of Christianity, were it inculcated on them in an intelligible manner." To the question whether and if so how Unitarians could aid the cause of Christianity in India, Rammohun returns the reply :—

Everyone who interests himself in behalf of his fellow creatures, would confidently anticipate the approaching triumph of true religion should philanthrophy induce you and your friends to send to Bengal as many serious and able teachers of European learning and science and Christian morality unmingled with religious doctrines, as your circumstances may admit, to spread knowledge gratuitously among the native community, in connection with the Rev. Mr. Adam. . . .

Unitarian missionary schools giving instruction in the rudiments of a European education in the English language and in Christian morality, mingling with it very little instruction relative to the doctrines of Christianity, would, he held, be of great use,—"the only way," in fact, "of improving their understanding and ultimately meliorating their hearts." "I may be fully justified in saying that two-thirds of the native population of Bengal would be exceedingly glad to see their children educated in English learning." "To the best of my knowledge, no benefit has hitherto arisen from the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of the East, nor can any advantage be expected from the translations in circulation." To the question whether any important impression will ever be made "except by the conversion and through the influence of persons of education," Rammohun answers characteristically, "Christianity, when represented in its genuine sense in any language whatever, must make a strong impression on every intelligent mind, especially when introduced by persons of education and

respectability." As the place most likely for successful propaganda he recommends Calcutta.

As a result of prospects thus advanced and of anticipated support from English-speaking lands, Mr. Adam, aided by Rammohun and the Unitarian Committee, proceeded to organize a Unitarian Mission in Calcutta. To its growing fund we find that Rahmmohun subscribed Rs. 5,000, Dwarkanath Thakoor Rs. 2,500, and Prusunnu Coomar Thakoor Rs. 2,500. Writing on June 4th, 1824, to Dr. T. Rees, of the Unitarian Committee in London, Rammohun reports:—

> As to the state of the Unitarian Society in Calcutta, our Committee have not yet been able to purchase a suitable piece of ground for a chapel and school. They will, I hope, soon succeed in their endeavours. We have collected, partly by purchase and partly by gift, a great number of works and established a pretty respectable library in Calcutta.

From this letter we learn that Mr. Adam is now styled "the Unitarian Missionary in Bengal." Rammohun prefaces the report with expressions of lively delight that the London Unitarians had reprinted his *Precepts of Jesus* and the two *Appeals* in its defence. He goes on naively to declare his grief and disappointment that George IV.,—whom he generously describes as "the most accomplished person of his time, of most enlightened acquirements and most liberal sentiments"—should not have used his royal influence to relieve the members of the Established Church from "the fetter" of the Thirty-nine Articles and from the repetition of the damnatory clauses of the "Athanasian Creed."

It is interesting to note that six days after Bishop Heber arrived in Calcutta (he came October 10th, 1823, and wrote the letter on the 16th) he informs the Dean of St. Asaph, "Our chief hindrances are some Deistical Brahmins who have left their old religion and desire to found a sect of their own, and some of those who are professedly engaged in the same work with ourselves, the Dissenters."

CHAPTER V.

(1821—1826.)

Journalistic and Educational Pioneer-work.

1821.—[*Second Appeal to the Christian Public* in defence of *The Precepts of Jesus*]. [*Brahmunical Magazine* I., II., III.] Dec. 4—Starts the *Sambad Kaumudi.*

1822—Baisakh. Starts the *Mirat-al-Akhbar.* About this time opens Anglo-Hindu School. Publishes *Brief Remarks on Ancient Female Rights:* [Jan. 30—*Final Appeal to the Christian Public.*]

1823, March.—Memorial against the Government Press Regulations. Appeal to the King in Council on the same. [May—The Tytler Controversy]. [Nov. 15—*Brahmunical Magazine* IV.] Letter to Lord Amherst on English Education (*Humble Suggestions to his Countrymen who believe in one God).*

1824.—[*Prospects of Christianity.*] *Appeal* for famine-smitten natives in South Deccan.

1825.—Different modes of Worship.

1826.—Published *Bengali Grammar* in English. His son acquitted of a charge of embezzlement. About the earlier part of the year, built the Vedant College.

It is characteristic of Rammohun's many-sided activity that during the period of his energetic and voluminous theological controversy, he was busily engaged in promoting native journalism and native education. His role was essentially that of the Enlightener; his one aim in publishing treatises on Unitarian divinity, in founding schools and colleges, and in conducting two newspapers was to enlighten the minds of his fellow-countrymen. He was certainly not the man to overlook the enormous value of the newspaper as an instrument for diffusing intellectual light. The relaxation in 1819 of the previously very stringent rules of press censorship enforced by the British Government was accepted by him as an invitation to the development of native journalism

The regulation requiring every newspaper before it was issued to be submitted to a Government official was dispensed with. Lord Hastings, the then Governor-General contented himself with prohibiting animadversions on the actions of Government, discussions likely to create religious alarm among the natives, or otherwise to stir up dissension, relying for the rest on "the prudence and discretion of the editors."

In a copy of Mr. Buckingham's *Calcutta Journal* in the latter part of 1821 appeared the "prospectus of a Bengalee weekly newspaper to be conducted by natives, printed and circulated in Bengalee and English." It was to be called *Sambad Kaumudi* or "The Moon of Intelligence." It was to deal with "religious, moral and political matters; domestic occurrences; foreign as well as local intelligence." The intimation of the price at which the new weekly was to be had is couched in terms of superabundant Oriental courtesy :—

To enable us to defray the expenses which will necessarily be attendant on an undertaking of this nature, we humbly solicit the support and patronage of all who feel themselves interested in the intellectual and moral improvement of our countrymen, and confidently hope that they will with their usual liberality and munificence, condescend to gratify our most anxious wishes, by contributing to our paper a monthly subscription of two rupees, in acknowledgment of which act of their benignity and encouragement, we pledge ourselves to make use of our utmost efforts and exertions to render our paper as useful, instructive and entertaining as it can possibly be.

The first number appeared December 4. 1821.* Its "address to the Bengal public" announced "the public good"

* [There is a considerable doubt as to the date of the first publication of the *Sambad Kaumudi*, most probably it appeared first in July 1819. In the list of Bengali publications compiled by Rev. Long in 1852 the *Sambad Kaumudi* is mentioned as a newspaper printed at the Sanskrit Press from 1819. The *Christian Observer* of Calcutta in 1840 in the list

to be its "guiding star." It gratefully acknowledgs Lord Hastings' action in removing the shackles from the Press. It promises to reprint in Persian, Hindustani and English such of its articles as seem to merit translation. It invokes the assistance of the Literati, and not the least significant promise of all—it offers to publish "respectful expression" of native grievancess.

"A newspaper conducted exclusively by natives in the native language," it describes itself as "a novelty at least if not a desideratum." We may regard it therefore as the parent, and Rammohun Roy as the founder, of native journalism in India.† Its consequent significance for the future of the Empire justifies the statement here of the contents of a few of its earlier numbers.

No. I.—The Editor's address to the Bengali community.

An Appeal to the Government for the establishment of a School for the gratuitous instruction of the children of poor but respectable Hindus.

An account of a miser prince.

of newspapers extinct before that date mentions the *Sambad Kaumudi* as first published in 1819. The *India Gazette* of July 1819 had a note about the pamphlet of Rammohun Roy on the Suttee, mentioning that it was reprinted in a Bengali newspaper and expected much good from it. The Bengali newspaper was evidently the *Sambad Kaumudi.* One of the colleagues of Rammohun Roy in editing *Sambad Kaumudi* was Bhawani Charan Banerjee, who contributed considerably to its columns. But when Rammohun Roy began to write against Suttee in the *Sambad Kaumudi* with great vehemence Bhawani Charan Banerjee withdrew his assistance and started another paper under the name of *Samachar Chandrika* which appeared in 1823. All these facts lead to the conclusion that the *Sambad Kaumudi* first appeared in 1819. Edi.]

† Two other native papers were started about the same time, one in Persian called the *Jami Jehan Numa* and run in opposition to the liberal views of the *Mirat*, the other in Bengali, and known as the *Sumachar Chandrica.*

No. II.—An Address to the natives, enumerating the advantages of reading newspapers.

Letter proposing to raise a fund to water the Chitpore Road.

Account of implicit faith in a Guru and an extraordinary gift.

Letter suggesting 22 instead of 15 as the legal age for succeeding to hereditary property.

Satirical account of the lavish generosity at the funerals of certain rich natives, who when alive were notorious for niggardliness.

Humble address to the Government soliciting the extension of trial by jury to the Mofussil, Zila and Provincial Courts of Judicature.

No. III.—An Appeal to the Government to relieve the Hindu community from the inconvenience consequent upon there being only one Ghaut for the burning of dead bodies; whereas an immense space of ground has been granted for the burial of Christians.

Appeal to Government for the prevention of exportation of the greatest part of the produce of rice from Bengal to foreign ports.

Appeal to Government to enable the middle class of native subjects to avail themselves of the treatment of European physicians.

Appeal to the Calcutta magistrates to resort to rigorous measures for relieving the Hindu inhabitants of Calcutta from the serious grievance of Christian gentlemen driving their buggies amongst them and cutting and lashing them with whips, without distinction of sex or age, while they quietly assembled in immense numbers to see the images of their deities pass in the Chitpore Road, when many of them, through terror and consternation caused by the lashing inflicted on the spectators, fell down into drains, while others were trampled under foot by the crowd.

This last heading gives a vivid glimpse of the way in which "Christian gentlemen" from Britain failed to make either their rule or their religion beloved by the natives. It also shows us how readily Anglo-Indians writing in the *Indian Free Press* would call "public attention at home" to the new venture "ere it is too late," and cry "*Obsta principiis.*" No. VI., it may be noted, contains "an appeal to the rich Hindus of Calcutta to constitute a society for the relief of destitute widows, upon the principles of the Civil and Military Widows' Fund, established by order of Government." No. VII. urges on Hindu parents to get their children

instructed in the native grammar before imposing on them the study of foreign languages. No. VIII. prints the plea of a philanthropist, who observing the misery caused by prejudices of caste, urges the Hindus not to debar themselves thereby from mechanical pursuits, but to cultivate "such arts as would tend to their comfort, happiness and independence."

The *Sambad Kaumudi* was for the common people. But Rammohun desired to supply information and guidance to the educated classes also, and in a form more peculiarly suited to their needs. In the following year (1822) he started a weekly newspaper in Persian, called the *Mirat-al-Akhbar* or *Mirror of Intelligence*. This came out on Fridays, as the Bengali organ on Tuesdays. The style of the new weekly may be gathered from an article which appeared in its issue of Oct. 11, 1822, on "Ireland; the Causes of its Distress and Discontents." The article opens with a short statement of the geographical position and political history of the island. "The Kings of England having shut their eyes against justice, gifted away to their own parasites the estates of the Irish noblemen." The account of the causes of Irish discontent is given with grave *naivete*:—

Although all the inhabitants of this island call themselves the followers of the religion of Jesus Christ (upon whom and the rest of the prophets of God be peace and blessing !), yet a great number of them on account of their differing in some particular point of faith from the religion adopted by the King of England, follow their own clergymen and Pope in the performance of religious duties, and refuse adherence to the royal divines of the Established Church of England ; and in consequence the stipends of their own divines are not defrayed from the revenue of the land but depend on the contributions of private individuals. Besides this, on account of the stipends of the royal clergymen who are appointed to officiate in Ireland, the Government of Ireland exact taxes every year from those who positively refuse to be led by these clergymen in religious matters. How admirable is the observation of Saadi (on whom be mercy !)—

Do not say that these rapacious Ministers are the well-wishers of his Majesty :
For in proportion as they augment the revenue of the State, they diminish his popularity ;
O statesman, apply the revenue of the King towards the comfort of the people ; then during their lives they will be loyal to him.

This Persian poetry Mr. Gladstone only succeeded in translating into Parliamentary enactment in 1869. The second cause adduced is still (1897) an unsolved problem :—

The nobles and other landed proprietors of Ireland pass their time in England, either with a view to raise themselves at Court, or to have all the luxuries of life at their command. And they spend in England an immense sum of the revenue of their lands, which they collect by means of stewards or farmers ; and consequently the tradespeople in England benefit by the liberal manner in which they spend their money, instead of the people of Ireland. And their rapacious stewards or farmers, for their own advantage and in order to show their zeal for the interest of their masters unmercifully increase the rent of the land and extort those rents from the peasantry. So that many from their improper behaviour are now deprived of the means of subsistence. . . .

The natives are noted for their good natural abilities and open disposition, as well as for their generosity and hospitality. Foreigners are of opinion that from the climate of Ireland the people are of quick apprehension and easily provoked (God knows best !)

The practical upshot of these explanations of the situation is to announce the ravages of famine in Ireland and to give the names of "a number of respectable European gentlemen of liberal principles and a body of liberal natives of this country," who have, "for the love of God," subscribed for the relief of the starving Irish. Irishmen who are proud of their nationality will not readily forget this tribute of appreciation and succour from one of the earliest pioneers of the National movement in India.

The National aspirations of Greece were not, however, favourably regarded by the *Mirat.* In an article published in November, 1822, quoted by a Calcutta paper as "expressing

the feeling of the thinking part of the natives generally," the writer rejoices in the receipt of the news of Turkish victory over the rebellious Greeks. He is manifestly jubilant that the Tsar with his grand army and his resolve "to conquer Turkey and destroy Islamism" was held back by Austria and England. Of the Greeks it is said, "Having returned from the deserts of rebellion, they have now taken up their abode in the city of comfort and obedience." Editorial information or prescience was this time at fault, since the Greek rebellion which broke out in 1821 only ended in the achievement of Independence in 1832. For this attitude to Greece, Mahometan sympathy with Turkey was of course responsible.

Such free criticism of English policy in Europe as well as satiric reference to British insolence in treatment of natives on the public roads, naturally aroused European susceptibilities. *John Bull*, a Calcutta print, is ridiculed by the *Hurkaru* (of September 2, 1822) for translating the Persian amiss and in its jealous apprehension rendering *tursa* "Christians" as "Infidels." The *Mirat* was not lacking in loyalty. It was most eulogistic in its remarks on Lord Hastings, the then Governor-General.

But the end of 1822 saw the close of Lord Hastings' Governor-Generalship with its liberal and enlightened policy. Between his departure and the arrival of Lord Amherst, his successor, the Hon. John Adams officiated as Acting Governor-General. This temporary elevation of an inferior official was marked by characteristically official measures for the restriction of liberty. A single paragraph from the *Mirat* in February attests the arbitrary measures being adopted :—

The eminently learned Dr. Bryce, the head minister of the new Scotch Church, having accepted the situation of Clerk of the Stationery belonging to the Honourable Company, Mr. Buckingham the editor of the [*Calcutta*] *Journal* observed directly as well as indirectly that it was unbecoming of the character of the minister to accept a situation like this ; upon which

the Governor-General, in consideration of his disrespectful expression, passed an order that Mr. Buckingham should leave India for England within the period of two months from the date of the receipt of this order, and that after the expiration of that period he is not allowed to remain a single day in India.

The *Journal* was suppressed, and at the close of 1823 Mr. Arnot, Mr. Buckingham's assistant editor, was arrested and put on board a home-going ship.

The notice expelling Mr. Buckingham was followed up, suddenly and without notice, on March 14th, by a rigorous Press Ordinance from the acting Governor-General in Council. The preamble stated that "matters tending to bring the Government . . . . . into hatred and contempt, and to disturb the peace . . . . . of society have of late been frequently published and circulated in newspapers." The Ordinance prescribed that henceforth no one should publish a newspaper or other periodical without having obtained a license from the Governor-General in Council, signed by the Chief Secretary.

Before this regulation could come into force, the law required it to be fixed up in the Supreme Court for twenty days, and then if not disallowed, registered. It was accordingly entered on March 15th. On the 17th, Council moved the Court to allow parties feeling themselves aggrieved by the new regulation to be heard. Sir Francis Macnaghten, the sole Acting Judge, fixed the 31st for the hearing of objections, but suggested that in the meanwhile the objectors would do well to state their plea in a memorial to Government. Foremost among those objectors was Rammohun Roy. He and his friends set about promoting the suggested petition, but, as he afterwards stated, "in preparing this memorial in both the English and the Bengalee languages, and discussing the alterations suggested by the different individuals who wished to give it their support and

signature so much time was necessarily consumed, that it was not ready to be sent into circulation for signature until the 30th of March." Consequently only fifteen natives had time to read and sign it; and the Government had no time, even if they wished, to act. Another memorial of the same tenour was hastily drawn up next day, signed by Rammohun and five other distinguished native gentlemen, and by counsel submitted to the Supreme Court. This memorial was attributed by its opponents to an English author, but was really, as was generally acknowledged later, the work of Rammohun. —It may be regarded as the Areopagitica of Indian history. Alike in diction and in argument, it forms a noble landmark in the progress of English culture in the East.

The memorial first sets out the loyalty and attachment of the natives to British rule. They had trusted the Government with millions of their money. Relying on the Government, landlords had improved, instead of impoverishing as formerly, their estates. They had prayed for British victory during the Napoleonic wars. They rejoiced in the literary and political improvements due to British influence. They were most loyal in Calcutta, where British sway was best known. Possessing the same civil and religious liberty along with a lighter taxation, they were not inferior in loyalty to British-born subjects. Among the institutions which tended to improve the minds and ameliorate the condition of the natives was the native Press, and chiefly the newspaper Press, with its four native newspapers—two in Persian, two in Bengali. These journals had done nothing to disparage the Government or to promote dissension. "Native authors and editors have always restrained themselves" from publishing matter obnoxious to the Government. Yet the Ordinance had been issued, requiring a license revocable at pleasure for all newspapers.

The first positive objection advanced against this new

measure will probably strike all Westerns who are not Quakers or Tolstoyans with some surprise. In order to secure the license, the applicant was apparently required to make an affidavit or statement on oath. But, the Memorial proceeds :—

Those natives who are in more favourable circumstances and of respectable character, have such an invincible prejudice against making a voluntary affidavit, or undergoing the solemnities of an oath that they will never think of establishing a publication which can only be supported by a series of oaths and affidavits, abhorrent to their feelings and derogatory to their reputation amongst their countrymen.

Light is thrown on this intense antipathy by a letter in the *India Gazette*, dated Dec. 9, 1824, from which the following sentences may be quoted :—

I have frequently inquired of Hindus the reason of their objecting to swear; and the answers I have received have been, "If I put my hand into the Gunga Jul [Ganges Water], I put my hand into the fire of hell"; or "Should I happen to say one word which is not true, I shall be tormented during a hundred transmigrations"; or "I shall sink my ancestors into places of torment." . . . They can make no distinction between voluntary and involuntary misstatements. *

The Memorial goes on to show that "a complete stop" in the diffusion of knowledge of a certain kind will result from the new Ordinance. The better informed natives will be prevented instructing the people in the admirable system of British Government. Natives will be precluded from acquainting the Government with the errors and injustice which its executive officers may commit in various parts of the country. After this deprivation of a right which they had not abused, the natives could no longer feel justified in boasting of the

* The Grand Jury at the Calcutta Sessions in October, 1825, proposed the substitution of a solemn declaration for an oath in the case of natives, declaring "It is notorious that by forcing a Hindu of any of the superior classes to swear, we inflict on him a disgrace in his own eyes and in the eyes of his fellow-citizens."

privilege of British protection. But surely the British Government will not follow the precedent of Asiatic despotism in hoping to preserve power by keeping the people in darkness. Experience proves that a good Government grows stronger as its subjects become more enlightened. Every good ruler, aware of human imperfection and amenable to reverence for the Eternal Governor, must be conscious of the liability to error involved in managing a great Empire and of the need of ready means of ascertaining consequent grievances. But the only effectual means is "Unrestrained liberty of publication", subject to the regular law of the land.

On this memorial being read, its prayer was supported by the speeches of Counsel, Mr. Fergusson and Mr. Turton. But Sir Francis Macnaghten gave his decision in favour of the Press Ordinance. In doing so, he absolutely ignored the native memorial, "not alluding to it in the most distant manner, nor to the arguments it contained." He further scandalized the memorialists by announcing that, before the Ordinance was entered or its merits argued in court, he had pledged himself to Government to give it his sanction.

There was but one resource left to the defenders of a free Press, and of that resource Rammohun did not hesitate to avail himself. He and his coadjutors appealed to the King in Council. The Appeal is one of the noblest pieces of English to which Rammohun put his hand. Its stately periods and not less stately thought recall the eloquence of the great orators of a century ago. In a language and style for ever associated with the glorious vindication of liberty, it invokes against the arbitrary exercise of British power the principles and traditions which are distinctive of British history.

An eloquent recognition of the benefits of British rule, benefits which had led Hindus to regard the English rather as deliverers than conquerors, sets in effective contrast a statement of the grievance complained of. The native press had aided

in diffusing these blessings and in inculcating an appropriate gratitude. *The Friend of India*, an organ of European missionaries, had acknowledged the valuable service rendered by the native newspapers and expressly declared that the liberty they possessed had not been abused by them "in the least degree." The sudden withdrawal of this unabused liberty could only have as its motive the desire to afford Government and all its functionaries complete immunity from censure or exposure or public remark. The law of the land being competent to deal with any offences committed by newspapers against public order, the new and arbitrary restrictions, if meant seriously, seemed to suggest that Government intended to interrupt the regular course of justice and take the law into its own hands. A free Press had never yet caused a revolution; but revolutions had been innumerable where no free Press existed to ventilate grievances. If this avenue of redress should be closed to the natives, they would consider "the most peculiar excellence of the British Government of India" done away, and themselves condemned to perpetual oppression and degradation. It placed their civil and religious rights "entirely at the mercy of such individuals as may be sent from England to assume the executive authority, or"—and here comes a politely covered thrust at Acting Governor John Adams—"rise into power through the routine of office, and who from long officiating in an inferrior station, may have contracted prejudices against individuals or classes of men, which ought not to find shelter in the breast of the legislator." Subordinate officials being fallible, Government ought to welcome the check imposed on them by the fact or dread of publicity. Even on the lowest ground, regarding India merely as a valuable property, the British nation would act wisely in seeing that so important an asset should have good care taken of it. Under Mahomedan rulers, Hindus had enjoyed every political privilege in common with

Moslems, but under British sway they were not allowed similar equality with their conquerors; and the slight compensation offered them in the liberty of their Press was a right they were the less prepared to forego. The Appeal concludes with the alternative; either let His Majesty restore the freedom of the Press or let him appoint an independent Commission to investigate from time to time the condition of his Hindu subjects, restraint of some kind being absolutely necessary to preserve them from the abuses of uncontrolled power.

Argument and eloquence, however, proved of no avail against the Anglo-Indian dread of native criticism. The Privy Council in November, 1825, after six months' consideration, declined to comply with the petition, presented by Mr. Buckingham, late of the *Calcutta Journal*, against the Press Ordinance of 1823.

Not many months after that Ordinance came into force, the *Mirat* ceased to appear. It lived in all only some sixteen months. The editor declared his inability to go on publishing under what he considered degrading conditions, and lamented that he, "one of the most humble of men," should be no longer able to contribute towards the intellectual improvement of his countrymen. The *Asiatic Journal* of January, 1824, in recording the announcement, objects to it as having a "direct tendency to reflect on the act of Government." So sensitive were Anglo-Indian susceptibilities that even the negative protest of a journalist ceasing to publish his paper was resented. Rammohun did not carry his protest so far as to stop the *Sambad* also. It was continued, and in fact survived its founder for several years. The question arises, why, if both must not be sacrificed, was the *Mirat* selected for sacrifice? Two reasons probably weighed with Rammohun: the greater cost and the greater risk of Government interference. The *Mirat* was addressed to a cultured constituency. The outlay involved in its production would therefore be larger, and its

circulation smaller; while its more critical attitude would naturally excite the keener suspicion in the breast of thin-skinned officials.*

The educational purpose which inspired Rammohun's journalism led him into several more distinctively academic enterprises. His share in founding, along with Sir E. H. East and Mr. David Hare, the old Hindu College, has already been noticed. In 1822 he opened on his own account an Anglo-Indian School for imparting a free education in English to Hindu boys. With the exception of a few subscriptions from other friends, the whole of the funds required were supplied by Rammohun. Mr. Wm. Adam, who was one of the visitors, thus speaks of the School in 1827:—

> Two teachers are employed, one at a salary of 150 Rs. per month, and the other at a salary of 70 Rs. per month; and from 60 to 80 Hindu boys are instructed in the English language. The doctrines of Christianity are not inculcated, but the duties of morality are carefully enjoined, and the *facts* belonging to the history of Christianity are taught to those pupils who are capable of understanding general history.

From reports of examinations, the school seems to have proved a fair success. The founder's control over it was not less real and continuous than his support of it. Mr. William Adam strongly desired to make it a public institution, to solicit for it public subscriptions, and to put it under the control of the Unitarian Committee. But Rammohun firmly refused his consent to the scheme. Mr. Adam was much distressed and felt it his duty accordingly to restrict his activity as a visitor. Even in that narrowed sphere he came

* At this point Miss Collet's revision of the continuator's manuscript ceases altogether. Of his work up to this point she sent (dictated) expressions of generous approval. The "few points" in this chapter which, she said, required "touching up," she regretted she was not then strong enough to specify. She reserved them for the next interview,—which, alas! never took place.

into collision with Rammohun's strong will. He complained that his fellow visitor, whom he considered quite unsuited for the post, upset the plans and practices which Mr. Adam had painfully introduced into the school. But Rammohun would not part with the obnoxious visitor, whose popularity with the natives was great; and Mr. Adam resigned in high dudgeon. This occurred in 1828.

Shortly after the opening of this school, in 1823,—the year most crowded with his theological polemic,—we find Rammohun in the thick of a great educational controversy. The British Government was known to be appropriating funds for the promotion of Indian education; and the kind of promotion most desirable was the subject of eager discussion. Should the Government seek simply to develop and deepen the education already in vogue in India? Or should it boldly endeavour to introduce the innovations of European science and European culture? The "Orientalists" clamoured for the exclusive pursuit of Oriental studies. They were hotly opposed by the "Anglicists," chief among whom was Rammohun Roy. The Government seemed inclined to yield to the Orientalist view and announced the intention of establishing a Sanskrit College in Calcutta. The step drove Rammohun, undaunted by the scant courtesy which his former appeals to the British authorities had received, to address a *Letter on English Education* to Lord Amherst, the new Governor-General. In this letter he expresses profound regret that the Government was proposing to found a Sanskrit College—"to impart such knowledge as is already current in India." Such a seminary would, he argues, resemble those existing in Europe before Lord Bacon's day, and would only "load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use." The Sanskrit language by reason of its great difficulty had been for ages a lamentable check to the diffusion of know-

ledge; but if it must be studied for the sake of the information it contains, its study might be promoted by grants to existing institutions where it was already taught. Rammohun sees no advantage in requiring young men to spend the best years of their life in the study of philological niceties. A more remarkable feature of his contention is its criticism of the Vedanta. He had, it will be remembered, translated large portions of the Vedanta into modern tongues. He had warmly defended its teachings against the attacks of the missionaries. Nay, in the fourth number of the *Brahmunical Magazine* which was published almost in the very month in which this *Letter* was written, he was still engaged in defending Vedantic doctrine. Yet he now writes:—

> Neither can much improvement arise from such speculations as the following, which are the themes suggested by the Vedanta,—in what manner is the soul absorbed in the Deity? What relation does it bear to the Divine Essence? Nor will youths be fitted to be better members of society by the Vedantic doctrines which teach them to believe that all visible things have no real existence, that as father, brother, &c., have no actual entity they consequently deserve no real affection, and therefore the sooner we escape from them and leave the world the better.

This last objection to the Vedantic doctrines is precisely that advanced by the missionaries in the *Sumachar Durpun* and assailed by Rammohun in the *Brahmunical Magazine*. The apparent breach of consistency involved in its endorsement here, will be considered subsequently.

After further objections to the "imaginary learning" of Hindu schools, he summarily assures Lord Amherst that "the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness." What he wants to see established is "a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, with other useful sciences." This, he urges "may be accomplished with the sums proposed, by

employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning educated in Europe and providing a College furnished with necessary books, instruments, and other apparatus."

Of this letter Bishop Heber wrote in March, 1824 *:—

Rammohun Roy, a learned native, who has sometimes been called, though I fear without reason, a Christian, remonstrated with this [Orientalist] system last year, in a paper which he sent me to be put into Lord Amherst's hands and which for its good English, good sense, and forcible arguments, is a real curiosity, as coming from an Asiatic."

The patronizing tone of these remarks reveals only too plainly the unfortunate attitude which Christian missionaries, even the most devout, assumed towards natives of India, who were, to say the very least, certainly not their inferiors.

"It was owing, perhaps, to this agitation," remarks Jogendra Chunder Ghose on this letter to Lord Amherst, "that the foundation stone of the building intended for the Sanskrit College was laid in the name of the Hindu College (February, 1824), and the Hindu College was located there together with the Sanskrit College."†

Within about a year of the completion of this Sanskrit and Hindu College, we find Rammohun taking a new and important step in his career as educational reformer. We learn from Mr. Wm. Adam, writing under date July 27, 1826, that :—

Rammohun Roy has lately built a small but very neat and handsome college, which he calls the Vedant College, in which a few youths are at present instructed by a very eminent Pandit, in Sanskrit literature, with a view to the propagation and defence of *Hindu* Unitarianism. With this institution he is also willing to connect instructions in European science

* Bishop Heber's *Journal.*

† The controversy between Orientalist and Anglicist, after raging for some dozen years was brought to a conclusion by Macaulay's famous Minute of Feb. 2nd, 1835, and Lord Wm. Bentinck's consequent resolution of March 7th, which by constituting English the official language of India gave the ascendency to Western ideals of education.

and learning, and in *Christian* Unitarianism, provided the instructions are conveyed in the Bengali or Sanskrit language.

The Western reader may perhaps be surprised to find Rammohun—scarcely two years after his opposing the Government scheme of a Sankrit College because of its promoting instruction in the Vedantic philosophy,—himself founding a Sanskrit and Vedant College. It may at first appear as much of a paradox as his advancing in the Letter to Lord Amherst the same arguments against the Vedanta which he had denounced in the *Brahmunical Magazine*. But to understand these seeming inconsistencies we must bear in mind the complex nature of the Vedantic system and the different practical issues bound up in the several controversies. The teachings of the Vedanta lend themselves to a remarkable diversity of theological interpretation. They are appealed to equally by dualistic and non-dualistic schools of thought. They contain passages which breathe a lofty and ethical Theism; in other places they seem to countenance a Pantheism that is simply Acosmism—the denial of all finite existence; and they also include much that, judged by the standards of Western culture, is puerile and fantastic where it is not demonstrably false. According as the Vedanta is taught with or without a proper selective adjustment of its widely various contents, its value as a subject of instruction may be set high or low. In the ordinary Hindu schools it was taught in false perspective, with a discrimination exercised if at all, in favour of what was trivial, incorrect, polytheistic. Rammohun therefore opposed with all his might the suggestion that the British Government should perpetuate or encourage this kind of Vedantic instruction. At the same time he saw in the Vedant rightly handled and "rightly divided" a means for leading his countrymen out of their prevailing superstition and idolatry into a pure and elevated Theism. Their devotion to the Vedantic scriptures was the

lever by which Rammohun hoped to lift them into a simpler and nobler faith. Therefore he founded the Vedant College; and therefore also he controverted the missionaries' wholesale disparagement of the Vedanta. If the missionaries had succeeded in discrediting the Vedanta, they would in Rammohun's eyes have broken down the bridge which enabled men to pass from Hindu Polytheism to Hindu Theism. He thus combated both the conservative Christian who advocated indiscriminate rejection and the conservative Hindu who advocated the indiscriminate retention of Vedantic teaching; and he provided for a discriminating instruction in the ancient system which should have the approval of liberal Hindus and liberal Christians.

This method is illustrated by a tract on *Different Modes of Worship* which appeared January 18, 1825. It was written in Sanskrit by Rammohun Roy under the name of Shivuprusad Shurma, and it was translated into English, with English annotations, by Rammohun Roy under the name of "A Friend of the Author." It propounded the difficulty: Some Shastras enjoin worship by means of idols, others dissuade from it: how reconcile the contrary advice? It finds answer in certain sayings of Vyas in the *Bhagavat* and of Shreedhur his commentator, to the effect that idol worship, along with ritual observances, is only of value so long as a man has not yet become conscious that the Lord of the Universe dwells in all beings. When he attains that consciousness, his worship becomes the discharge of the four duties of "Charity to the needy," "Honour to others," "Friendship," and "An equal regard to all creatures," under the observant conviction that "the all-powerful Lord is in the heart watching over the soul." The writer remarks in a note that "worship through matter" was sanctioned in Judaism though forbidden in Christianity. This reference suggests that Rammohun conceived of his Hindu Unitarianism standing to historic Hinduism as the

New Covenant stood to the Old: a development of the spiritual core at the expense of the ritual and material kernel.

His Vedant College and his translations from the Vedanta served alike as witness to his continuity with the historic past of India and as the implement enabling him to connect her with a progressive future. But of his equal readiness to avail himself of the powerful solvents of English influences we are reminded by his publication in 1826 of a Bengali Grammar in English. His Anglo-Hindu school and his "Anglicist" remonstrances had shown how eager he was to introduce the better-educated classes of India into the new world of European literature; the Bengali Grammar reveals his anxiety to facilitate the inroad of the aggressive European in the dialect and understanding of the common people. In his Introducttion to the Grammar (June 12) he refers to "the persevering exertions of many European philanthropists in the noble attempt to ameliorate the moral condition of [the] inhabitants"; who "with a view to facilitate intercourse between themselves and the natives" and without expectation of finding any literary treasures in the language, labour to acquire the vernacular. This circumlocution in describing the missionaries and the careful avoidance of any reference to their distinctively religious work are significant; and are still more so when taken along with the express declaration which follows that he intended the Grammar "as a humble present for these worthy persons," to aid them "in their own studies or in directing those of others." Of this contribution to missionary philology Mr. W. Adam wrote at the time. "The work throws much new light upon the idioms of the language, but the arrangement is defective in consequence of the desultory mode of composition he indulges in." A Bengali version of it was brought out by the author in 1833. Bengali owes much to Rammohun. It was his writings chiefly which raised it into a literary language. As by

Wiclif in England and Luther in Germany, so also by Rammohun in Bengal, the despised dialect of the common people was made the vehicle of the highest ideas and became thereby permanently elevated. Reformation in religion has often proved ennoblement in language.

During the whole of this period of theological controversy and journalistic and educational activity Rammohun never left out of sight the more directly philanthropic projects to which he had early given himself. The campaign against Suttee was not allowed to flag. He used the *Sambad Kaumudi* as a regular weapon in this agitation. It was an agitation slowly but steadily affecting the attitude of the British authorities to the whole question. Of this the proceedings of the Nizamut Adaulut on the 25th of May, 1821, supply striking proof. The Chief Judge Leycester, while of opinion that Suttee could not be put down generally, advised its suppression "by proclamation" in divisions where it was little in practice, viz., Dacca, Moorshedabad and Bareilly and in Allahabad, Futtehpore, Bundelcund, and Calpee. The second judge, Mr. Courtney Smith, to his lasting honour be it recorded, demanded the "entire and immediate abolition" of Suttee. The two other judges, of those who drew up "Minutes" on the subject, pronounced against abolition as likely to imperil public order, but one of them, Mr. Dorin, suggested that the barbarous rite should be suppressed in a single district, say the Hooghly district, by way of experiment and example. He emphasized the extremely significant fact that, in answer to a circular sent out the previous year to the magistrates of the Lower Provinces, "about one half of the magistrates" declared in favour of total abolition at once. The reply of Lord Hastings, made on the 17th of the following July, stated that he could not approve any of the three suggestions, not feeling that the time had arrived for either experimental, gradual, or entire prohibition. He

expressed the hope that the more educated natives would "gradually become disposed to abandon the practice." He had doubtless in mind the propaganda of Rammohun Roy and his followers.

As though to lend confirmation to this hope, the indefatigable reformer in the course of the same year (1822) published a valuable tract on "Modern encroachments on the ancient rights of females according to the Hindu Law of inheritance." In this he applied to social reform the method he had found fruitful in theological discussions. He appealed from the present to the past and over against the prescription of custom set the authority of antiquity. By numerous citations he proves that "All the ancient law-givers unanimously award to a mother an equal share with her son in the property left by her deceased husband, in order that she may spend her remaining days independently of her children." But unfortunately later jurists made void, by their expositions, this salutary law. As a consequence "both stepmothers and mothers have, in reality, been left destitute in the division of their husband's property and the right of a widow exists in theory only among the learned but unknown to the populace." Hence, "a woman who is looked up to as the sole mistress by the rest of a family one day, on the next becomes dependent on her sons and subject to the slights of her daughters-in-law." On the death of their husbands women had only three courses before them :—

Firstly. To live a miserable life as entire slaves to others without indulging any hope of support from another husband.

Secondly. To walk in the paths of unrighteousness for their maintenance and independence.

Thirdly. To die on the funeral pile of their husbands, loaded with the applause and honour of their neighbours.

Having shown that Hindu antiquity, far from demanding Suttee, had made honourable provision for the maintenance

of the widow, Rammohun passes on to attack the institution of polygamy, which had made difficult the fulfilment of the ancient law of female inheritance. Where plurality of wives was most frequent, as in Bengal, the number of female suicides was proportionately great. "This horrible polygamy among the Brahmuns is directly contrary to the law given by ancient authors." A second marriage while the first wife was alive was allowed only on the ground of specified physical or moral defects.

It is interesting to learn from Mr. William Adam's letters of 1826, Rammohun's personal antipathy to polygamy. He was, as we have previously related, married by his father at nine years of age to two child-wives. To both he felt himself bound to remain faithful, but on the death of one (in 1824), who was the mother of the children, he became in practice as in theory a monogamist. It is sad to find that even so his married life was not too happy. The *Asiatic Journal* for November, 1833, states in its obituary notice that "Rammohun Roy has left in India a wife from whom he has been separated (on what account we know not) for some years." Babu N.N. Chatterjee states * that Rammohun "lived apart from his wives simply because they were Hindus, and he was considered an outcast by them. His wives did not like to live with him." All the more commendable, therefore, is his uniform and chivalrous championship of womanhood. So strongly was he opposed to polygamy that (Mr. Adam tells us) he inserted clauses in his will disinheriting any son or more remote descendant who had more than one wife at the same time. But he was, we are informed, a monogamist not on religious grounds but on grounds of expediency.

In his tract on the subject, Rammohun further recalls ancient authorities to show that a daughter was entitled to

* In a letter to the author, of date January 2, 1883.

receive a fourth part of the portion which a son could inherit. This had been so far set aside by modern practice that the daughter was deprived of any portion if there were a son surviving and was even—in express violation of ancient law—sold in marriage. He concludes the tract with a guarded hope that not merely Hindu Pandits but European judges might be called in to pronounce on cases of disputed inheritance.

Lord Hastings' despatch of August 15, 1822, which was written a few months before his departure from India, and which may therefore be taken to sum up the views formed during his Governor-Generalship, shows the very high importance which the British Government attached to Rammohun's campaign againtst Suttee. After deploring the increase in the number of victims during the previous year, which he attributed to the fanatic spirit roused by the divided state of feeling among the Hindus, "his lordship in council does not despair of the best effects resulting from the free discussion of the matter by the people themselves, independently of European influence and interposition; and . . . it only remains for him to watch carefully the indications of a change of sentiment amongst the people . . . . and to encourage to the utmost every favourable disposition." He thus went out of office with the hope that the practice would be extirpated not by the peremptory authority of the Government but by persuasive arguments of Rammohun and his following. He had reason highly to appraise the effect of their humane propaganda. It is interestingly attested in Bishop Heber's *Journal*. From a conversation with Dr. Marshman, January 15, 1824, he learns in the first place that Suttee had increased of recent years, an increase which the Baptist imputed to "the increasing luxury of the higher and middling classes, and to their expensive imitation of European habits," which made them eager to avoid the expense of maintaining widows. "But," Dr. Marshman is reported to

have said, "the Brahmuns have no longer the power and popularity which they had when he first remembers India, and among the laity many powerful and wealthy persons agree, and publicly express their agreement, with Rammohun Roy in reprobating the custom, which is now well known to be not commanded by any of the Hindu sacred books, though some of them speak of it as a meritorious sacrifice." But opinion among the Government officials was, Bishop Heber remarks, still divided as to the practicabilty of prohibition. The Nizamat Adaulut was indeed, slowly moving towards the desired end. Mr. Haringay, one of the judges, proposed in a minute of June 28, 1823, to issue further regulations enabling the police to prevent Suttees taking place until full inquiry had been made. At the same time he personally approved suppression. His brother judges however held that to impose fresh regulations and safeguards was to deepen in the native mind the impression of the rite being legalized and countenanced by Government. Rather than add new ragulations, the majority of the Court were (July 23, 1824) of opinion that it would be preferable to pass an enactment for the future prohibition of Suttees throughout the country. The pressure of public opinion in Great Britain and in their own Court, led the Directors to express themselves very vigorously on the subject to the new Governor-General, in a despatch of Juue 17, 1823. On Dec. 3rd 1824, LordAmherst in the course of his reply, declared :—

> We entirely participate with your honourable Court in the feelings of detestation with which you view the rite and in your earnest desire to have it suppressed; and we beg to assure you that nothing but the apprehension of evils infinitely greater than those arising from the existence of the practice could induce us to tolerate it for a single day.

The annual returns of the number of Suttees, with the comments of the Judges and the Governor in Council, kept the fires of public indignation well stoked. Each annual

increase horrified, each decrease encouraged, the upright-minded into projects of reform. We append a table of totals up to the end of the period covered by this chapter.*

SUTTEES IN THE BENGAL PRESIDENCY.

Divisions.	1819 A.D.	1820	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826
Calcutta	421	370	392	328	340	373	398	324
Dacca	55	51	52	45	40	40	101	65
Moorshedabad	25	21	12	22	13	14	21	8
Patna	40	42	69	70	49	†59	†47	†65
Benares	92	93	114	102	121	†76	†55	48
Bareilly	17	20	15	16	12	10	17	8
	650	597	654	583	575	572	639	518

• The famine in the Southern provinces of the Deccan in 1824 called forth from fourteen native signatories a singularly catholic appeal, which if not composed (as it was not signed) by Rammohun Roy, shows how his inter-religional views were spreading. The appeal was for funds to establish in the famine-stricken districts Chatrams, or charitable inns, for Hindus, Moslems, Christians, as the case might require, each providing the food needed by the respective religionaries. Christians were adjured to contribute in the name of Christ, and the duty was enforced by reference to His teachings. Moslems were similarly reminded of the precept and example of their Holy Prophet and Ali; and Hindus were referred to humane sayings of Krishna and Bhisma. The Appeal proceeds:

We conjure those of the three faiths of Christians, Mussulmans, and Hindus, in the name of our common *Creator* and *God*, to show the

* See page 28 for statistics of Suttees in the years 1815—1818.

† The increase in Patna and decrease in Benares after 1823 is largely due to the fact that the district of Goruckpore was then detached from the division of Benares and added to that o Patna.

affection that man, as a commoner of nature, should bear to his fellow-man, by relieving so many individuals of those three religions who are dying daily for want of their usual sustenance.

The same wide sympathy with men of different faiths which breathes through this Appeal is illustrated by a project which Rammohun cherished a year later. Writing in 1826, Mr. Wm. Adam announces that Rammohun "is about commencing a life of Mahomet, who has, he thinks, been much misrepresented both by his friends and his enemies." The line he took over the *Precepts of Jesus*, against non-Christians and orthodox alike, suggests the line which this biography of the prophet of Arabia would have followed. It is a matter of profound regret that the idea was never carried out. A study of the founder of Islam by the founder of the Brahmo-Samaj would doubtless have formed a valuable contribution to the religious development of modern India.

The close of this period was temporarily clouded for Rammohun by grave domestic anxiety. His son was "the confidential native servant of the Burdwan Collector of Revenue" and was prosecuted on a charge of embezzlement of the public money. He seems, writes Mr. Adam, "to be the victim, partly of the negligence of his employer and the envy of his fellow servants." It was only a part of the campaign of persecution carried on in the law courts against the hated Reformer. Suspense of the issue weighed heavily on Rammohun's mind. We find him under the pressure of it neglecting his correspondence with English and American friends, as Mr. Adam feels bound to explain to them. The youth was acquitted in the Circuit Court in February, 1826, but the case was carried thence before the Sudder Nizamut Adaulut. Happily, Mr. Adam was able to write in August of the same year that "Rammohun Roy is very well, having lately brought the prosecution against his son to a successful issue." But the end of this vexatious forensic attack was not yet.

The intensity of fatherly affection which Rammohun here displayed sets in a more remarkable light the method of education he had adopted with his growing boys. Mr. William Adam, in his lecture on Rammohun, declares :—

He employed no direct means, no argument or authority, no expostulation or entreaty to turn his sons from the idolatrous practices and belief, in which they had been educated by the female members of his family and by the Brahman priests whom they cousulted and followed. He gave them a good education ; by his personal demeanour secured a place in their esteem and affection; set them an expample in his life and writings ; and then left them to the influence of idolatrous associations on the one hand,and to the unfettered exercise of their reason on the other. His eldest son, the hope of his heart, for some time after attaining mature age, continued an idolator; but before his father's death, with his younger brother, abandoned the superstition of the country, and zealously co-operated with his father.*

* From Rakhal-Das-Haldar, in his notes to the lecture, we learn concerning these youths, that the elder died without leaving male issue, and that the younger, Rama Prasad Ray, "lived to attain eminence at the bar of the highest Judicial Tribunal of Bengal, and was the first native Justice elect of the High Court at Fort William, though he was prevented by death from sitting on the Bench."

CHAPTER VI.

(1826—1828.)

Founding the Brahmo-Samaj.

1826.—Vedant College built.

1827.—*Divine Worship by means of the Gayuttree.* Aug. 3—English Unitarian services recommenced. *Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of Worship?* Nov.—Adam's Evening Lectures for the Natives. Dec. 30—British Indian Unitarian Association formed.

1828.—Feb.—Adam proposes an Auxiliary of Hindu Unitarians. Dev's suggestion to hold Hindu services. English Unitarian services given up. Adam resigns.—March—Lord Amherst leaves India. July—Lord William Bentinck arrives at Calcutta as Governor-General. Aug. 18—Letter on Trial by Jury. Aug. 20—First Meeting of the Brahmo-Samaj.

We now enter on the most distinctive period of Rammohun's crowded career. What has already transpired has made it abundantly evident that he was above all and beneath all a religious personality. The many and far-reaching ramifications of his prolific energy were forth-puttings of one purpose. The root of his life was religion. He would never have been able to go so far or to move his countrymen so mightily as he did but for the driving power of an intense Theistic passion. The years in which he stands out as the founder of a distinct religious community must therefore be regarded as the most characteristic epoch in his history.

It is fortunate for us that just at the opening of this period we have an authoritative statement of Rammohun's attitude to the two great historic faiths between which he stood. In a letter to Dr. Tuckerman, dated Feb. 18—20, 1826, Mr. William Adam thus explains the Reformer's relation

to Hinduism and Christianity,—an explanation which, it will be seen, Rammohun himself endorsed :—

Mr. Tuppin in one of his letters asks—Does Rammohun Roy profess to be a Christian ?......I find it difficult to give a definite answer to this question, but the nearest approach to the truth, although I hope and believe that it is not the truth itself, would perhaps be to say that he is both a Christian and a Hindu,—Christian with Christians and a Hindu with Hindus. And before you say either that I am contradicting myself, or that he is insincere in his religion, you must candidly weigh all the circumstances in which he is placed. In the first place then, his relinquishment of idolatry is absolute, total, public, uncompromising ; and when you reflect who he is and what he is, this is of itself an invincible test of integrity of religious principle and conduct. But his relinquishment of idolatry is not inconsistent with the retention of his Brahmanical rights, and observance of the rules of caste, the latter of which is necessary to the former and both are necessary to enable him to be useful to his countrymen,—the thing which he has most at heart. On the other hand, although he may safely relinquish idolatry, he cannot safely profess Christianity. The profession would involve loss of caste, loss of property, loss of influence, loss of everything but a name ; and while he employs caste, property, influence everything to promote, not the nominal profession merely, but the enlightened belief and salutary influences of Christianity, his claim to be a practical although not a nominal Christian would seem to be undoubted. In this point of view, Hinduism furnishes the antidote to its own inherent intolerance. There is another reason for the course he has pursued. The profession of Christianity would identify him in the opinion of Hindus not with the respectable and liberal portion of the Christian population, but with the low, ignorant and depraved converts recently made by the English, or long since made by the Portuguese, missionaries,—and in the opinion of Mussulmans who hold him in high esteem, with Trinitarians generally ; for such Mussulmans suppose all Christians to be. In other words, the profession of Christianity would inevitably, in the present circumstances of this country, identify him with persons from whom he differs as widely as from those with whom he is now identified. He has, therefore, only a choice of evils, and he has hitherto chosen that which, although he groans under its bondage, leaves him greater liberty and usefulness than he could otherwise possess. I have thus given you the view of his circumstances and conduct which I

have reason to suppose he would himself give you if he were now writing to you; and I have only further to add that . . . I do *not* feel these reasons to be quite so convincing as they appear to him. . . . I have no doubt that in his opinion they possess all the force necessary fully to justify him in the sight of God and his own conscience in the course which he has pursued.

Since writing the preceding paragraph, I have had an opportunity of showing it to Rammohun Roy, who considers it a correct representation of his feelings and sentiments.

In a later letter to Dr. Tuckerman, of date Oct. 14, 1826, Mr. Adam remarks:—

You . . inquire whether Rammohun Roy is a Unitarian Christian, or only a Theist, and on this point I beg to refer you to my No. VI., which contains all the information I can give you respecting it. . . In addition to the particulars then given, he permits me now to say that failing the male heirs of his own body, of whom there are two, he has bequeathed the whole of his property to our Mission; and while he regrets the appearance of ostentation which this statement may bear, he leaves it to yourself to judge whether he would have been likely to do so if he did not sincerely embrace the Christian religion and ardently desire to extend its blessings to his countrymen.

To Dr. Tuckerman's inquiry concerning the rites of caste which Rammohun as a Brahman observed, Mr. Adam (June 24, 1827) answered:—

All the rules in the present state of Hindu society he finds it necessary to observe relate to eating and drinking. He must not eat of the food forbidden to Brahmins nor with persons of a different religion from the Hindu or of a different caste or tribe from his own. This is the only remnant of the rules of caste to which he still adheres, and even this remnant I have reason to know he frequently but secretly disregards. . . Both in the marriages and deaths that happen within his domestic circle he rigidly abstains in his own person from every approach to the idolatrous rites usually practised on such occasions, although he does not prohibit the other members of his family from engaging in them if they think proper.

This compliance with the rules of caste must, one would think, have been extremely distasteful to Rammohun, inasmuch as he considered caste to be one of the gravest of the

many ills under which his country laboured. In a private letter written about this time (January 18, 1828) he thus expresses himself:—

I agree with you that in point of vices the Hindus are not worse than the generality of Christians in Europe and America; but I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes, introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise .... It is, I think, necessary that some change should take place in their religian, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort. I fully agree with you that there is nothing so sublime as the precepts taught by Christ and there is nothing equal to the simple doctrines he inculcated.

He goes on to deplore the way in which they were disregarded and distorted by Christians, but hopes for a change to be effected by the growing spirit of inquiry and humanity. It is said* that Rammohun "translated into Bengali a work called *Bastra Suchi*† written by a Buddhist named Buddha Ghosh, opposing caste. This is an interesting link of connection between the ancient and most famous movement for reforming Hinduism, and its modern successor. It illustrates anew Rammohun's readiness to borrow books or arguments from any religion, Mohammedan, Buddhist, or Christian, i[f] only thereby he might purify Hinduism.

In a letter of introduction to Jeremy Bentham, of Nov. 14 1830, Mr. J. Young, whom some one called "his deares[t] friend in India," says of Rammohun :—

He has externally maintained so much, and no more, of Hindoo custo[m] as his profound knowledge of their sacred books enabled him to justi[fy]

* By Babu Nagendra Nath Chatterjee at a meeting in memory [of] Rammohun Roy, January, 1879.

† [Evidently there is a mistake here. The book translated by Ra[m]mohun Roy was *Bajra Suchi* by Mrityunjayacharya. Edi.]

relaxing, however, little by little, yet never enough to justify his being 'out of the pale.' I need not say that in private it is otherwise, and that prejudices of all sorts are duly contemned by our philosopher.

His impartial attitude towards other faiths was not yet understood by his Unitarian allies. From many other passages in their letters partly cited above, it is pretty evident that both Mr. Adam and Dr. Tuckerman had convinced themselves that Rammohun accepted what they called "the Divine authority of our Lord." He certainly was very closely identified with the Unitarian Mission. The Unitarian services had, for the time, been given up; as a consequence, we find Mr. Adam writing of Rammohun, in February, 1826, "at present he does not attend anywhere," but expressing the confidence that as soon as Unitarian worship was resumed he would as before be among the most regular worshippers. From the letter of October 14, 1826, cited above, we learn that Rammohun had made provision in his will for Mr. Adam's family,—a tribute to the cause as well as to the friendship of the Unitarian missionary. Earlier in the same year he had been "so much gratified by the perusal of the 'One Hundred Arguments for the Unitarian Faith,'"—sent him by the American Unitarian Association—"that he . . . caused an edition to be printed at his own Press for distribution in Calcutta."*

Along with Dwarkanath Thakur, Prusunnu Coomar and Radha Prasad Roy, and six Englishmen he served on the Unitarian Committee. In the renewal of that Committee's activity in 1827 he had prominent share. On Mr. Adam (whose journalistic venture, the *Calcutta Chronicle*, was ruthlessly suppressed by the Government a few months later) resuming operations as missionary, Rammohun's son, Radha Prasad, offered a site

* Letter of Wm. Adam to Rev. E. S. Gannett, Boston, U.S. A August 3, 1826.

adjoining the Anglo-Hindu school for a native chapel and school. The cost of the proposed building was put at three or four thousand rupees which, Mr. Adam wrote (to Rev. W. J. Fox, Aug. 1. 1827), "Rammohun Roy thinks he will be able to collect among his native friends." Unitarians in Britaian had despatched, some months previously, about 15,000 rupees.* Pending the anticipated erection, the Committee rented the Hurkaru public rooms which were attached to the *Harkaru* newspaper and library; and there morning service was commenced by Mr. Adam on Sunday, August 3, 1827. Thus began Rammohun's second attempt to find his Church—his fellowship of worship and propaganda—under the auspices of Unitarian Christianity.

His literary activity revived about this time and in directions characteristic of it. "For a period of more than two years," he wrote to Mr. J. B. Estlin, February 7, 1827, "owing to the most afflicting circumstances arising from the hostile feelings of some individuals towards my family, I found myself totally unable to pursue any undertaking or carry on correspondence, even with those whom I sincerely loved and revered." But, his son's trial having ended satisfactorily in 1826, he managed to publish in the following year "A translation into English of a Sanskrit Tract inculcating the Divine worship; esteemed by those who believe in the revelation of the Veds as most appropriate to the nature of the Supreme Being." This is really a commentary, partly composed of sayings of the sages, on "the *Gáyutree*, the most sacred text of the Veds." The version given of that mystic formula reads, "We meditate on the cause of all, pervading all, and internally ruling all material objects, from the sun down to us and others." As though by way of offset to this excursion into the Vedic Scriptures, we find† Rammohun engaged with Mr. Adam in translating the Sermon on the Mount

* So Rammohun states in his letter of Feb. 2, 1827, to Dr. Estlin.

† From a letter of Wm. Adam to W. J. Fox, Sept. 10, 1827.

into Sanskrit, the idea being eventually to turn the whole of the *Precepts of Jesus* into that language. Towards the close of the year, he published a little tract entitled *Answer of an Hindu to the Question*—"Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship instead of the numerously attended Established Churches?" It bears the signature of Chandra-Shekar Deb, a disciple of Rammohun; but, as Mr. Adam informed Dr. Tuckerman in a letter dated Jan. 18, 1828, it was entirely Rammohun's own composition. Mr. Adam adds, "I regret that he continues to publish these things in the name of another, but I cannot succeed in dissuading him from it." This persistent assumption of other people's names is indeed a puzzle. There seems to have been a secretive strain in Rammohun's blood, which made him favour this pseudonymous authorship. The *Answer* simply amounted to saying that in a Unitarian place of worship he heard nothing of Incarnation, Union of Two Natures, or Trinity,—doctrines which he regarded as only a variant of the anthropomorphic and polytheistic mythology of popular Hinduism.

But the Unitarian exotic did not thrive. Its roots would not strike. The English morning service begun in August was "very indifferently attended."* From the first it "received little support from avowed Unitarians." "Even a Majority of the Committee regularly absented themselves." An evening service was tried in November. It was attended at first by 60 to 80, but gradually "dwindled almost to nothing."† Mr. Adam was surprised to find the native members of his Committee stoutly opposed to the erection of a native chapel for lectures in the native language. Their plea was that "anything said or written in the vernacular tongue will be degraded and despised in consequence of the medium through which it is conveyed." English, Persian, and Sanskrit were the only languages which

* Letter of Mr. Adam to Dr. Tuckerman, Nov. 30, 1827.

† The same to the same, Sept. 1, 1828.

would secure respect.* Mr. Adam endeavoured to console himself by a course of "familiar lectures on the First Principles of Religion" which he began in October "for the exclusive benefit of the natives . . . in the native part of the city"—in Rammohun's Anglo-Hindu school, in fact. His audiences at first ranged from 12 to 25. But even Rammohun did not attend, and in the end poor Mr. Adam was left "with scarcely a single individual to address."† Before things had reached this pass, he made gallant efforts to turn the tide. On the 30th of December, 1827, he got the Unitarian Committee to adopt a proposal which he had drafted so long ago as May of the previous year,—to constitute themselves into "a more complete organization" to be known as "the British Indian Unitarian Association." This step was intended to deepen the local *esprit de corps* and bring members into closer touch with Unitarians in Great Britain and America. But the Sunday congregations went on declining. Then Mr. Adam, thinking it wise to give up the services before the attendance had become ridiculously small, proposed that he should be sent on a missionary journey to Madras. But the Committee refused consent, on Rammohun's representations chiefly, that the funds could not stand the cost and that Mr. Adam was indispensable to Calcutta.‡ There was no way out but to face failure and confess it. Mr. Adam had been baffled in all has plans. As we saw in our last chapter, he had tried to run the Anglo-Hindu school as a Mission agency, but had been so frequently baulked by Rammohun's autocratic will as in the end to be compelled to resign all share in its management. His congregations both British and native had run down almost to zero. He accordingly requested the Committee to point out some other form of missionary service which would justify him in receiving the stipend which came to him from abroad for that

* W. Adam to W. J. Fox, Sept. 10, 1827.

† Letter to Dr. Tuckerman, Sept. 1, 1828.

‡ W. Adam to Dr. Tuckerman, Jan. 4. 1828.

purpose. The Committee saw no "fit mode in which Mr. Adam can employ himself as a Unitarian missionary," and could therefore no longer disburse the stipend referred to. Poor Mr. Adam retired heartbroken." This decisive act seems to have taken place in the first half of 1828.

We are now brought to the verge of the foundation of the Brahmo Somaj. We have described Mr. Adam's futile endeavours somewhat fully, because it was upon the ruins of the Unitarian Mission that the new Theistic Church was reared. Between the two movements there was the most direct connection. Religious beginnings are often lost in obscurity, but not so in this case. There are two accounts of the origin of the Brahmo Somaj: distinct and independent, but quite harmonious.

The popular and best known may be given first.* "In those days a newspaper was published, named the *Harkara*. In the office of the *Harkara* the Rev. Mr. Adam had established an association under the name of the Unitarian Society. . . One day at the close of worship, Ram Mohun Rai with his disciples was returning from the *Harkara* office. On the road Tara Chand Chakravarti and Chandra Shekar Deb said, 'What need is there for us to go to the prayer-house of strangers to perform our worship? We ought to erect a house of our own in which to worship one God.' This proposal was the first germ of the Brahmo Somaj. The proposer, Chandra Shekar Deb, is now† living."

When this event happened we have no precise indica-

* The following is taken from "Little Stories about Rammohun Roy," 2nd part, from *Tattwabodhini* No. 445, month Bhadra. 1828 (Bengal era). The recounter, Babu Rajnarain, whose father was a disciple and coadjutor of Rammohun Roy, states that he gave Kisori Chand Mitra for his Life of Rammohun, which appeared 36 years previously in the *Calcutta Review*, "these' anecdotes and others taken from the lips of my father.

† 1879.

tion. It could scarcely have occurred before or during the time when Rammohun was actively organizing the British Indian Unitarian Association (Dec. 30, 1827). It probably took place in the early part of 1828, when the Unitarian congregations were fast dwindling away. Whenever it was made, the suggestion at once impressed Rammohun. He consulted his comrades, Dwarkanath Thakur and Roy Kalinath Munshi. On their approving the idea, he called a meeting at his house, when these and other friends, including Prasanna Kumar Thakur and Mothuranath Mullick agreed to carry it out. A site at Simla in Calcutta was first thought of, but subsequently abandoned; and until a suitable place could be found and building erected, it was decided to hire a house belonging to Kamal Lochan Bose, at Jorasanko, in the Chitpore Road, and there commence public worship.*

The other account makes Mr. Adam the proximate initiator of the Somaj. It is given in his letters, written while the new movement was in its earliest stages. In a letter to Mr. John Bowring, London, under date, Feb. 5, 1828, he writes:—

I must add before I conclude, that I am endeavouring to get the Hindu Unitarians in Calcutta to unite in forming an Association auxiliary to the British India Association, and for the establishment of the public worship of the One God among themselves, for the printing of tracts and for the diffusion of religious knowledge generally among their countrymen. To prevent prejudice from being excited, it will be necessary to keep Christianity out of view at present in connection with this auxiliary, but it will really be (what it perhaps may not be *nominally*) an auxiliary to our views, and a highly valuable one, too, if I can succeed in creating the necessary degree of interest to begin and carry it on.

On April 2, of the same year, he writes to Dr. Tucker.

* So Leonard in his *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, pp. 36, 37.

man, announcing the discontinuance of the native service, and remarking,—

Since then I have been using every endeavour in my power to induce Hindu Unitarians to unite among themselves for the promotion of our common objects, and I am not without hopes of succeeding, although I have a great deal of apathy to struggle against.

On January 22, 1829, writing to Dr. Tuckerman, he recalls the fact that "one of the resolutions"—presumably passed in connection with the formation of the British Indian Unitarian Association—had invited all Unitarians, whether Christian or Hindu, to form themselves into Associations, etc., and proceeds,—

There has accordingly been formed a Hindu Unitarian Association, the object of which is, however, strictly Hindu and not Christian, *i.e.*, to teach and practise the worship of One Only God on the basis of the divine authority of the Ved, and not of the Christian Scriptures. This is a basis of which I have distinctly informed Rammohun and my other native friends that I cannot approve.

But he has, he says, encouraged them to go forward, as he considers it "a step towards Christianity." and thinks that "the friendly feeling which . . happily exists between Christian and Hindu Unitarians should be preserved." He has, therefore, recommended his Committee to make a grant of 500 rupees to the Hindu Association, and has himself occasionally attended their services. This "Hindu Association" is, of course, the Brahmo Somaj.

There is no discrepancy between the two narratives. The idea may have arisen quite spontaneously without as well as within the circle of Hindu reformers. From the "great deal of apathy," indeed, which Mr. Adam complains of on April 2, it would seem that Chandra Sekhar Dev had not then made the suggestion on which Rammohun acted so eagerly. And from this it would follow that Mr. Adam really originated the idea, Rammohun having had it pressed on his notice since the beginning of February. The Hindu may have

hung back until the project was broached by his own followers and their readiness to take action thereby attested. But, even if Mr. Adam can claim the credit of first suggesting the distinct organization for worship, we must remember that he was only a secondary agency. He and all his associations were spiritually begotten by Rammohun Roy. And the Brahmo Somaj was but the last development of a series of tentative social efforts which reached back to the very beginning of Rammohun's reforming career. Even when at Rungpur (1809—1814) he held meetings for religious discussion. In 1815 he founded the Atmiya Sabha and kept it going month by month until 1819. After that he still continued lecturing to a private circle of friends and followers. In 1821 he converted Adam from Trinitarianism and organized with him the Unitarian Committee. He had assissted in its resuscitation and re-organization in 1827. And now the group of comrades and disciples which had hung around him these many years were at last ready to form an independent community, no longer for dialectical or educational purposes only, but for worship,—for distinctly religious fellowship. The share which Unitarianism had in the birth of the Brahmo Somaj was distinctly maieutic not maternal.

The great commencement took place on Wednesday, the 20th of August, 1828. Then the native Theistic Church of modern India was born. It was at first called simply *Brahma Sabha*,—the Society of God. The inaugural preacher was Ramchandra Surma. His discourse was upon the spiritual worship of God. His text, which was taken from various parts of the Hindu Scriptures, read, "God is One only without an equal. In whom abide all worlds and their inhabitants. Thus he who mentally perceives the Supreme Spirit, in all creatures, acquires perfect equanimity, and shall be absorbed into the highest essence, even into the Almighty."

All worship, whether of natural objects, images, persons was indirectly worship of the Supreme; but direct worship was the most excellent. Its superior excellence was attested by revelation (" the Veds, the Institutes of Manu, and all Scriptures of acknowledged authority"), by reason, which discarded all outward ceremonies and found worship to consist in self-discipline, self-realization, and service of others, and by experience; for while indirect worshippers quarrelled with each other's partial views of God, the direct worshiper had quarrel with none, for he adored the One God whom they also under howsoever imperfect and differing forms actually adored.

This sermon was translated into English by Tarachand Chakravarti, and published. In sending copies to a friend named Captain A. Froyer (Nov. 19), Rammohun spoke of it as "exhibiting the simplicity, comprehensiveness and tolerance which distinguish the religious belief and worship formerly adopted by one of the most ancient nations on earth and still adhered to by the more enlightened portion of their posterity."

Mr. Adam thus describes (to Dr. Tuckerman, January 22, 1829) the order of their weekly meeting, which was usually held on a Saturday evening, between 7 and 9 :—

> The service begins with two or three of the Pandits singing, or rather *chanting* in the cathedral style, some of the spiritual portions of the Ved, which are next explained in the vernacnlar dialect to the people by another Pandit. This is followed by a discourse in Bengali... and the whole is concluded by hymns both in Sanskrit and Bengali, sung with the voice and accompanied by instrumental music, which is also occasionally interposed between other parts of the service. The audience consists generally of from 50 to 60 individuals, several Pandits, a good many Brahmins, and all decent and attentive in their demeanour.

The Calcutta *John Bull*, of August 23, 1828, in reporting the opening ceremony in somewhat similar terms observes

that in delivering the sermon the officiating minister lectured "from a separate room, that the Veds may not be desecrated by being in the same apartment with the *profanum vulgus* of hearers." Two Telugu Brahmans were permanently secured for the recital of the Vedas. Utsavananda Vidyavagisa read from the Upanisads, and Ram Chandra Vidyavagisa explained them in Bengali. Tarachand Chakravarti was appointed the first secretary.

The new departure caused no little disappointment among European residents. The *John Bull* laments that the liberal Hindus have "from Unitarianism very naturally slid into pure Deism," and bewails the lost hope of Rammohun Roy becoming the great agent in Christianizing India. Even Mr. Adam's eyes were considerably opened. In the letter last cited he declares—

> Rammohun Roy, I am persuaded, supports this institution, not because he believes in the divine authority of the Ved, but solely as an instrument for overthrowing idolatry. To be candid, however, I must add that the conviction has lately gained ground in my mind that he employs Unitarian Christianity in the same way, as an instrument for spreading pure and just notions of God, without believing in the divine authority of the Gospel.

But, however unpopular with Europeans, the new departure made its way among the educated Hindus of Calcutta. The numbers in which they attended, and the rapid increase in the funds of the Society showed a marked contrast to the fate of the earlier efforts put forth by the Unitarian Committee. The Somaj had evidently come to stay. It was no exotic imported from abroad. However suggested, it was an indigenous product of the Hindu mind; and it took root and grew.

As Rammohun and his band of disciples now stand out together as a distinct religious community, their mutual manner of life claims our attention. It was through these dis-

ciples that the work of the great reformer was carried on and made permanently fruitful; they were the "living stones" which he shaped into a lasting edifice. Of his relations to them we have only a few glimpses, but they are sufficient to set his work in a more genial and human light than that of the mere teacher or leader. We are told that he "always displayed much affection towards his disciples." In addressing any one of them he habitually said *Beradar*,—the Persian word for brother. They, however, usually addressed him as *Dewanji*, the title of respect borne by the collector. Nor did he limit this fraternal appellation to his own following. He used it to all whom he met. And the brotherhood he believed in was no mere matter of names. It was Oriental in its warmth of demonstrativeness. It was Western in its equal freedom. It is said that "if any cause of joy arose he immediately embraced his followers. And he was not above receiving kindly words of rebuke from them, as we shall see later.

Rammohun made no secret of the strong Theistic passion which ruled his life. A favourite disciple remarked that whenever he spoke of the Universal Theism, to the advocacy of which he had devoted himself, he was moved even to tears.* Hearing of a man who from Deist turned Atheist, Rammohun rejoined, "And later he will become a beast." Yet intense as was his religious zeal and his aversion to disbelievers in Deity, he could tolerate men of sceptical opinions even among his intimate friends. "Babu Prusunnu Coomar Thakur, had a great affection for Rammohun Roy, and for the Brahmo Somaj, but he was a sceptic. For this

* Babu N. N. Chatterjee, in a letter of January 2, 1883, states that Babu Ananda Chandra Bose, favourite disciple of Rammohun Roy, told his son Babu R. N. Bose, that "his religion was Universal Theism. Whenever he spoke of this Universal religion, *he was so much moved that tears came out from his eyes.*"

reason Rammohun Roy, called him a rustic philosopher."* Hume and the French school of deniers were known *urbi et orbi*; Babu Prusunnu was a sort of country cousin aping the cut of their philosophic habit. Thus the master would banter and condemn, without alienating an unbelieving disciple.

"When not engaged in benevolent works," says Babu A. C. Bose, "he was constantly advising his disciples." One disciple smitten with a fair Rachel had had palmed upon him an ill-favoured Leah. Naturally wroth with his father-in-law, he was about to avenge himself for the deception by taking another wife. Rammohun dissuaded him. "The tree which bears excellent fruit is beautiful," said he. "If your wife bears you a fine child, you must consider her to be in all respects beautiful." The anecdotist adds that, as it actually turned out, "the sons of that disciple were the most forward in promoting widow-marriage and all the most excellent features in Rammohun Roy's beloved work in the Brahmo Somaj."

Like many other religious reformers, Rammohun introduced changes in dress. He adopted the costume of the Mussulmans. "He directed that a closely twisted turban should be worn instead of a loose one, and a *choga* instead of a skirt. He tried zealously to keep this style of dress in fashion."† He made it a rule for himself and his disciples always to wear it when attending the Somaj. He was very particular about the observance of this rule. He asked a friend to reprove a disciple who had come to worship in his office clothes,—the ordinary *dhuti* and *chadar*. He held that "handsome apparel should be worn in God's *durbar*." He was very careful in other ways to show respect to the

*Babu R. N. Bose's Little Stories" in *Tattwabodhini*, Nos. 444 and 445

† Nagendra Babu, in a speech at the commemoration of R. Roy, January, 1879.

act of Divine service. Thus he would never go to the Samaj save on foot ; he only returned in his carriage. He did not usually reprimand a faulty follower,but when it was no longer a case of minor transgression but an offence of a serious nature, he did not hesitate to exercise discipline. "For excess in drinking he has refused to see the offender for six months. Thus the disciple was corrected."*

" Rammohun could not," as has been observed, " rebuke his followers for ordinary faults. But if he committed a fault himself, and a disciple reproved him he received the rebuke with great gentleness. According to the custom of the time, Rammohun Roy wore long hair. After his bath he was somewhat long in dressing. Observing this his plain spoken disciple, Tara Chand Chakravrati, quoted the first line of a song running, ' How much longer will you please yourself studying your face in the glass ?' and added. ' Is this song only for other people, Mahashoi ?' Confounded, Rammohun Roy replied, Ha ! brother, you are quite right.' ' ' †

Of the daily habits of the master, the following interesting account is furnished by Mr. G. N. Tagore,‡ on the authority of his father, who was an intimate friend and disciple :—

Rammohun Roy was an early riser, and regularly took his morning walk. He used to oil his body every morning before bathing. Two big fellows used to oil him and shampoo him. While engagged in this process he would read by rotation and day by day in parts the Sanskrit grammar Moogdhabodha. After bath he would have his breakfast in the Indian fashion, squatting on the ground, surrounded by Indian utensils for food. His breakfast consisted of fish and rice and perhaps milk 'too. He never took any meals between his morning and evening meal. He generally used to work till two and then go out and see his European friends in the

* Babu R. N. Bose at the same meeting.

† Babu R. N. Bose at the same meeting.

‡ In a letter to the Author.

18

afternoon. His evening meal was between seven and eight, and that as in the English fashion but the dishes were Mohammedan dishes, *Pillau*, *Copta*, *Korma*, etc.

He never went out without his shawl turban,—not like the present Bengalis with a French smokeing cap. When at home he was always dressed in the Mohammedan fashion, *Chupkan*, *Ungaga*, *Pyjamsa*, and a skull cap on his head. He never sat bareheaded, following in this instance the Mohammedan custom. He never gave up his Brahmanical thread. His spoken Bengali was highly classified in structure. His English was good, but he spoke with great hesitancy lest he should commit some verbal error or other.

Another and slightly different account of Rammohun's day is gathered by a friend of the author, R. D. H., from conversation with Ramhari Das, "the old and faithful servant of Rammohun Roy," at Burdwan in 1863 :—

He used to rise very early, about 4 a. m., to take coffee, and then to have his morning walk, accompanied by a few persons. He would generally return home before sunrise, and when engaged in morning duties Golokdas Napit would read to him newspapers of the day. Tea would follow; gymnastics; after resting a little he would attend to correspondence ; then have his daily bath ; breakfast at 10 a. m. ; hearing newspapers read ; an hour's siesta on the bare top of a table ; getting up he would pass his time either in conversation or in making visits. Tiffin at 3 p.m. ; dessert 5 p.m. Evening walk ; supper at 10 p.m. He would sit up to midnight conversing with friends. He would then retire to bed again eating his favourite cake, which he called "Halila." When engaged in writing he would be alone.

If no man is a hero to his valet, just as little should we expect a man to be a saint to his cook. Yet Rammohun's cook who accompanied his master to England and knew him in his decadence as well as in his prime, bore witness to his punctual piety : "*The worship of God was Rammohun Roy's first daily work.*

A pretty little incident is preserved by babu R. N. Bose,* who had it from his father, which sets the dignified Brahman in a new and attractive light.

* In a letter to the Author.

Rammohun Roy was one morning walking in Bow Bazaar. He perceived a vegetable-seller looking in vain for some one to place his load of vegetables on his head. Although dressed in nice clothing, Rammohun Roy did not hesitate to place the basket on the man's head. Many gentlemen walk in the early morning in handsome garments, but how many among them would show their benevolence by an act of this kind?

It was in this circle of disciples that "The Hymns of Rammohun Roy" were mostly born. He lacked not, it seems, "the accomplishment of verse." He had cherished ambitions as a poet, but as he playfully remarked, Bharat Chandra's achievements in Bengali poetry were such as forbade any competition. But he did not shrink from employing the still plastic Bengali as the metrical vehicle of his religious life. All the hymns in the volume quoted above, except those marked by author's initials, are from his pen. By those who know the language they are said to belong to a very high order of religious poetry, the sublimity of the thought being admirably sustained by the dignity and music of the words. A translation of one of Rammohun's hymns by A. Tosh, may be cited here as illustrative of its purport:

Think of that final day on earth,
    Appalling thought!
When friends and neighbours all will speak,
    But thou wilt not.

When with thy wife and little babes,—
    To thee so dear,—
To part shall sure thy bosom rack
    With pain severe.

When piercing eyes their strength shall lose,
    The pulse be still,
The vital warmth for ever fled,
    The limbs be chill.

Thy friends shall mourn, thy friends shall weep
    Most bitterly;
And for thy hoards of cherished wealth
    Anxious thou'lt be.

Then, yet be wise, thy pride abjure,
Thyself resign
To that Eternal Source of Truth—
His Will Divine!

Prose versions of two other hymns by Rammohun Roy may also be given:

Meditate on the Only One
Who pervades land, water, and air,
Who has created this Universe of which there is no bound.
He knows all, but none can know Him.
He is Lord of Lords, the God of Gods, and the Master of Masters:
Let us know this Adorable One.

A Thing that surpasses speech,
How can it be described in words?
Of Him the Universe is a Shadow:
He is without likeness as the Scriptures declare:
Where can we find His likeness?
If thou wouldst know, meditate with singleness of mind.
Then thou shalt attain true knowledge, and shalt be free from error.
I know no other way.

The spirit of sacred song extended from the master to the disciples. They brought him their verses, and when the hymn pleased him, he would reward the author with a joyous embrace. Several of their compositions are included in his collection where they are distinguished from his by appended initials.

Of the founder at the close of this memorable epoch an interesting picture is presented by Col. Young, who writes from intimate personal knowledge, in a letter dated Calcutta, Sept. 30, 1828, to Jeremy Bentham. It gives quite another aspect of these eventful years. This is what the Colonel says:—

His whole time almost has been occupied for the last two years in defending himself and his son against a bitter and vindictive persecution which has been got up against the latter nominally, but against himself and his abhorred free opinions in reality—by a conspiracy of his own

bigoted countrymen, protected and encouraged, not to say instigated, by some of ours—influential and official men who cannot endure that a presumptuous "black" should tread so closely upon the heels of the dominant white class, or rather should *pass* them in the march of mind. Rammohun Roy, after an arduous and prolonged battle through gradations of tribunals, has at length by dint of talent, perseverance, right, got the better in the last resort; but the strife and the magnitude of the stake and the long despairs of justice have shattered his nerves and bodily health and his energies of mind. It is now over,* and I hope most fervently that he will recover himself again. Not only has he no *equal* here among his countrymen, but he has none that at all approach to equality, even among the little "sacred squadron" of disciples whom he is slowly and gradually gathering around him in despite of obstacles. . . But he perseveres, and does make a distinct and visible progress, slow as it is—very slow. It must increase in geometrical ratio if he is only spared long enough to organize the elements he is gathering together of resistance to superstition and fanaticism. . . .

It is strange that such a man should be looked upon coldly, not to say disliked by the mass of Europeans,—for he is greatly attached to us and our *regime*. Not that he loves our churches, or priests, or lawyers, or politicians, but because he considers the contact of our superior race with his degraded and inferior countrymen as the only means and chance they have of improving themselves in knowledge and energy. . . . .

One regrets to record this indictment of Anglo-Indian sentiment, all the more that it is so well substantiated. The native champion of English civilization deserved better treatment from our countrymen.

The ominous reference to Rammohun's health will not escape the reader's notice.

* *i.e.* The case against the son. The case against the father was only settled Nov. 10, 1831.

CHAPTER VII.

(1828—1830.)

The Abolition of Suttee

1828.—March—Lord Amherst leaves India. July 4—Lord W. Bentinck proclaimed Governor-General. August 18—Rammohun's Letter on the July Act. August 20—The Brahmo-Somaj founded.

1829.—[*Religious Instructions founded on Sacred Authorities*]. Nov. 8—Lord W. Bentinck's Minute on Suttee. Nov. 12—Rammohun's letter on the European (Indigo) planters. Dec. 4—Regulation passed for the ABOLITION of Suttee.

1830—Jan. 8—Rammohun notifies to Lord W. Bentinck his elevation to the rank of Rajah. January 16—Presents Anti-Suttee address of thanks to Lord W. Bentinck. January 17—Formation of the *Dharma Sabha.* January 23—The Adi Somaj building opened. Its *Trust-deed. Abstract of the Arguments* regarding Suttee. *Rights of Hindus over Ancestral property.* July—Rammohun helps the missionary, Duff, to found his first school. Nov.—Rammohun sails for England.

The concluding stages of the Anti-Suttee movement form a highly instructive chapter in the history of the British government of India. It is interesting to watch the slow and cautious steps with which the official mind approached the decision which was at last precipitated by the resolute action of one strong personality. The feeling of the authorities had been, as we have seen, opposed to forcible repression of the rite. They preferred to hope that the influence of European education and the efforts of native reformers like Rammohun Roy would lead to its gradual desuetude. Out of this otiose optimism they were startled by the sudden increase of victims in 1825. The annual tale of Suttees rose at a bound from 577 to 639,—an advance of more than ten per cent. And the increase was not least rapid in and around Calcutta,—the very

district where European culture was most strongly entrenched. The Nizamat-Adalat considered the matter afresh (in Nov. 1826). Judge Smith again insisted on immediate and entire prohibition ; and he was supporthed in this demand by Judge Ross who expressed the belief that it would not, as had been feared, cause any disaffection among the native troops. These minutes coming before the Council, Vice-President Bayley (Jan. 13, 1827) could not commit himself to so peremptory a policy, but recommended that Suttee should be prohited in the territories where the earlier regulations were not in force, and where the British sway had been recently introduced, viz. in the districts of Delhi, Saugor, Nerbudda, Kumaoon, and Rungpore. Mr. Harington (Feb. 18, 1827) drafted a Minute for the suppression of Suttee, against the time when that measure should be decided on. On March 1st, Vice-President Combermere strongly advocated the immediate adoption of Mr. Bayley's proposals. Lord Amherst (Mar. 18) declined the taking of this step, as he did not believe the practice prevailed in the districts specified, or that half measures would be productive of goed ; and he was not prepared to enact its total suppression. He trusted to the diffusion of knowledge among the natives for the gradual eradication of the "detestable superstition." He "would rather wait a few years" for this desirable consummation. At the end of 1827 the Judges reiterated their convictions on the matter, and Mr. Bayley urged his plea once more. On Jan. 4, 1828, Lord Amherst again declined to legislate, looking to "general instruction and the unostentatious exertions of our local officers" to bring about the diminution, and, "at no very distant period the final extinction of the barbarous rite." This is practically his last word on the subject. Two months later he left India.

He was succeeded in the Governor-Generalship by a man of very different character. Lord William Bentinck was

one of those resolute Englishmen, of slight culture but remarkable practical insight, who, seeing that a certain thing needs to be done, do it, and by the fact accomplished dissipate a thousand fears and difficulties. Faced with an ugly deficit and charged with unpopular commissions from the Directors, he cheerily undertook one fresh measure after another of dreaded reform, and showed how much stronger one man in earnest is than a whole crowd of conventional obstacles. He found the Suttee problem confronting him. He was not content, like Lord Amherst, to "wait a few years." He proceeded to grapple with it at once. He was well aware that the ultimate sanction of British sway was the sword; and his first quest was to know how far the army would support him. Confidential inquiries from forty-nine experienced officers elicited the gratifying information that the Sepoy would be scarcely if at all affected by the prohibition of the practice. Twenty-four out of the forty-nine officers declared in favour of its immediate and entire abolition; only five were opposed to change of any kind. The army was safe.

The judiciary was daily becoming more pronounced. The humane zeal of local British magistrates outran their legal powers. Cases occurred where they interfered to prevent Suttees which the law allowed; and the Supreme Court was forced, on appeal, to sanction the perpetration of the horrid deed. But the English gentlemen who formed the Nizamat-Adalat winced under the charge of "unnecessarily authorisizing suicide"; and we are not surprised to find that in 1828—before the reports of the military officers had been presented—four judges out of five declared for putting a stop at once and for ever to the hateful custom. A year later all five judges were agreed. The Superintendents of Police for both Upper and Lower Provinces emphatically vouched for the complete safety of the step. Nine-tenths of the public func-

tionaries in the interior were reported to be in its favour. Anglo-Indian opinion was practically unanimous.

Native opinion it was more difficult to sound directly. But the Governor-General had too keen an eye for the material facts of the situation to overlook the value of the man who had been a life-long mediator between Hindu and European civilizations; and he was still less likely to omit consulting the great native champion of the Anti-Suttee movement. Lord William took counsel of Rammohun Roy. There is an interesting story of the way their first interview was arranged, which we transcribe from the Rev. Principal Macdonald's lecture on the Hindu Reformer * :—

Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, on hearing that he would likely receive considerable help from the Rajah in suppressing the pernicious custom of widow-burning, sent one of his aides-de-camp to him expressing his desire to see him. To this the Rajah replied, "I have now given up all worldly avocations, and am engaged in religious culture and in the investigation of truth. Kindly express my humble respects to the Governor-General and inform him that I have no inclination to appear before his august presence, and therefore I hope that he will kindly pardon me." These words the aide-de-camp conveyed to the viceroy, who enquired, "What did you say to Rammohun Roy?" The aide-de-camp replied, "I told him that Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General, would be pleased to see him." The Governor-General answered "Go back and tell him again that *Mr. William Bentinck* will be highly obliged to him if he will kindly see him once." This the aide-de-camp did and Rammohun Roy could no longer refuse the urgent and polite request of his lordship.

The incident sheds light on the character of both the illustrious reformers. Rammohun's refusal may at first cause some surprise. He might have been expected to welcome

* Published at the *Herald* Press, Calcutta, 1879. The lecturer gives the incident on the authority of "a Bengali friend." Essentially the same account was communicated in writing to the Commemoration of Rammohun Roy in January, 1879, by Rammohun's "oldest pupil," Ananda Chandra Basu. His version of his Master's declinature runs: "I am withdrawn from worldly affairs and am devoted to the reading of the Shastras and the study of religion" etc., etc.

conference with a ruler so able and willing to accelerate reform. But it must be observed that the invitation gave no hint of the particular purpose for which it was issued. Rammohun did no more than decline an invitation to Court; he pleaded a distaste for its worldly pageantry and frivolous ambitions; and perhaps he was unwilling to give colour to the charge of his being a tool of the conquerors. When he found it was the man and not the Court functionary who appealed to him, he straightway waived all scruple and agreed to come.

A more official and less picturesque account of the matter is given by the *India Gazette*, of July 27, 1829:—

An eminent native philanthropist who has long taken the lead of his countrymen on this great question has been encouraged to submit his views of it in a written form, and has been subsequently honoured with an audience by the Governor-General, who, we learn, has expressed his anxious desire to put an end to a custom constituting so foul a blot. . . .

The *Gazette* goes on to mention three courses as open to the Government,—either rigidly to enforce existing regulations; or to suppress Suttee in the provinces of Bengal and Behar where it was most prevalent, but where British rule was longest known and best appreciated; or to abolish it throughout the Presidency.

The purport of Rammohun's advice to the Governor-General has been preserved in Lord Wm. Bentinck's Minute of Nov. 8. And here another surprise awaits us. We naturally suppose that the leader of the revolt against the burning of widows would eagerly grasp at the prospect of its prompt and forcible suppression by Government. But Rammohun positively endeavoured to dissuade Lord Bentinck from this drastic project. The Governor-General, after detailing Mr. Horace Wilson's arguments against abolition, wrote on:—

I must acknowledge that a similar opinion as to the probable excitation of a deep distrust of our future intentions was mentioned to me in

conversation by that enlightened native, Rammohun Roy, a warm advocate for the abolition of *sati* and of all other superstitions and corruptions, engrafted on the Hindu religion, which he considers originally to have been a pure Deism. It was his opinion that the practice might be suppressed quietly and unobservedly by increasing the difficulties and by the indirect agency of the police. He apprehended that any public enactment would give rise to general apprehension; that the reasoning would be: 'While the English were contending for power they deemed it politic to allow universal toleration and to respect our religion, but having obtained the supremacy their first act is a violation of their profession, and the next will probably be, like the Muhammadan conquerors, to force upon us their own religion.'

We may explain Rammohun's attitude by recalling his constitutional aversion to coercion; and any one who had undergone the bitter persecution which had fallen to his lot might be pardoned for over-estimating the strength of popular antagonism to reform. The man of force argued differently from the man of suasion. He observed that out of 463 Suttees 420 took place in the Lower Provinces and 287 in the Calcutta Division. The figures for Suttees in the Bengal Presidency during the last four years in which the practice was tolerated are given thus:—

DIVISIONS	1825	1826	1827	1828
CALCUTTA	398	324	337	309
DACCA	101	65	49	47
MURSHIDABAD	21	8	2	10
PATNA	47	65	55	55
BENARES	55	48	49	33
BARELLY	17	8	18	10
TOTAL ...	639	518	510	464

The people in these districts had through the centuries been so habituated to submission that "insurrection or hostile opposition to the ruling power may be affirmed to be an impossible danger." Had Suttee been prevalent among "the bold and manly people" of the Upper provinces, the problem would have been fraught with much graver peril. But, as the faculty of resistance had all but died out of the chief practisers of Suttee, their apprehensions and suspicions might be safely disregarded.

So Lord Wm. Bentinck cut the Gordian knot; and on the 4th of December, 1829, the Regulation was passed which declared the practice illegal and punishable as a criminal offence. All persons convicted of aiding and abetting in the sacrifice of a Hindu widow, whether she were a willing victim or not, whether she requested them or not, were pronounced guilty of culpable homicide; and where violence or other means of overpowering the victim's will were employed, the death sentence might, at the discretion of the Court, be inflicted. Suttee was abolished. The reputation of the British Government and the fair fame of religion itself were redeemed from one of the foulest stains.

It would not be just to describe this result as a triumph of principle over policy. The toleration of Suttee hitherto had been due to a conflict of principles. On the one side was the plain principle of humanity, which demanded the instant suppression of the rite. On the other side was the sacred principle of religious liberty, which forbade the conqueror to interfere with the religious practices of a subject race. One cannot but admire the sensitive magnanimity which mingled with the calculating prudence of the British rulers and made them shrink from doing violence even to the most barbarous and outrageous dictates of the native conscience.

It is Rammohun's distinctive glory that he relieved the British Government from this deadlock. He proved from

the authoritative standards of Hinduism that Suttee was not a religious duty. He did more than this. He showed that not religious devotion, but the avaricious desire of relatives to avoid the cost of supporting the widow, had a great deal to do with the perpetuation of Suttee. Its suppression would therefore do no wrong to the faith which British honour had pledged itself to tolerate and respect. The principles of humanity and of religious liberty no longer clashed. The atrocity could consistently be put down. This solution of the difficulty was set in the forefront of the prohibitory Regulation :—

> The practice of Suttee, or of burning or burying alive the widows of Hindoos, is revolting to the feelings of human nature ; *it is nowhere enjoined by the religion of the Hindoos as an imperative duty ; on the contrary, a life of purity and retirement on the part of the widow is more especially and preferably inculcated*, and by a vast majority of that people throughout India the practice is not kept up nor observed ; in some extensive districts it does not exist ; in those in which it has been most frequent it is notorious that in many instances acts of atrocity have been perpetrated which have been shocking to the Hindoos themselves, and in their eyes unlawful and wicked. The measures hitherto adopted to discourage and prevent such acts have failed of success, and the Governor-General in Council is deeply impressed with the conviction that the abuses in question cannot be effectually put an end to without abolishing the practice altogether.

But for the researches and the agitation carried on by Rammohun Roy, it is a question whether this preamble could have been written. Certain it is that the sentences which we have italicised would have fallen almost powerless but for the way Rammohun had driven home the truths they contained —by speech and newspaper and pamphlet—to the native mind.

But the old custom was not to be surrendered without a strong protest. The *Sumachar Chundrika*, the organ of

Conservative Hinduism, sounded the alarm; and the *India Gazette* of Nov. 30th announced that a petition against the abolition of widow-burning was already in progress. The *Gazette* expressed the hope that the *Sambad Kaumudi* and the *Bungu Doot*, as representing the more liberal portion of the native public, would correct current misconceptions and set the action of the Government in the right light. This deserves notice, as tribute to the value of Rammohun's journalistic work. The petition against the new Regulation found little support, the *Gazette* said, among the respectable and influential classes. Signatures were procured with difficulty, having to be extorted by threats and taunts. So stated the *Asiatic Journal* of June 1830, which even went so far as to declare that "the Government had satisfied itself that the majority of the native community was decidedly opposed to the practice."

At last on January 14th (1830), "a numerous and respectable body of petitioners," as the Governor-General described them, consisting of 800 inhabitants of Calcutta, laid before him their prayer for the abandonment of the prohibition. The main purpose of their representations was to overthrow the position which Rammohun, and after him the Government, had taken up,—that the practice of Suttee was not required by the laws of Hindu religion. This they denounced as "a doctrine derived from a number of Hindoos, who have apostatized from the religion of their forefathers, who have defiled themselves by eating and drinking forbidden things in the society of Europeans and are endeavouring to deceive your Lordship in Council." They humbly submitted that "in a question so delicate as the interpretation of our sacred books and the authority of our religious usages none but pundits and Brahmins, and teachers of holy lives and known learning and authority ought to be consulted,"—not "men who have neither any faith nor care for the memory of

their ancestors." They suggested with a touch of rather pungent irony that if his Lordship in Council *would* assume to himself "the difficult and delicate task of regulating the conscience of a whole people . . on the authority of its own sacred writers," he should trust to recognized and accredited and orthodox experts. To assist him in this direction, they appended a paper of citations from legal authorities, signed by 120 pundits, and intended to show that Suttee was a religious duty. They were obliged to quote the decisive sayings of Vishnu and Manu, which allowed a widow either to practise austerities or to ascend her husband's pyre. By tortuous exegesis and by liberal appeal to immemorial usage, the effort was made to transmute the option between alternatives into a demand for self-immolation. Lord Bentinck, in reply, was unkind enough to say that the authorities they cited "only confirmed the supposition that widows are not by the religious writings of the Hindoos commanded to destroy themselves. "No attack on Hindu religion was committed or intended. If they disputed his interpretation of Hindu and British laws, they might appeal to the King in Council. Another petition, of similar purport and signed by 346 "respectable persons" from the interior, was presented at the same time, with legal opinions signed by 28 pundits.

Counter demonstrations were speedily forthcoming. Two days afterwards two addresses were presented to the Governor-General in support of his anti-Suttee policy. One was from the Christian inhabitants of Calcutta, and bore some 800 signatures. The other was signed by 300 native inhabitants of the same city and presented by Rammohun Roy and several of his well-known comrades. This address (Jan. 16th), of which Rammohun is the reputed and probable author, refers the introduction of Suttee to jealousy and selfishness, acting under the cloak of religion, but in defiance of the most sacred authorities. It rehearses the yet more

barbarous abuses of this barbarous rite, and rejoices at the prospect of "the most ancient and purest system of Hindu religion" being "no longer set at nought by the Hindus themselves." It expresses "the deepest gratitude" and "the utmost reverence" to his Lordship in Council "for the everlasting obligation" he had "graciously conferred on the Hindu community at large." The signatories finally confess themselves "at a loss to find language sufficiently indicative even of a small portion of the sentiments" they desire to express. Rammohun's joy at so unexpected an erasure of this historic blot from the Hindu escutcheon might well be too great to be altogether articulate.

Next day the opponents of the measure met and resolved to appeal to the authorities in England. Feeling the need of some permanent organization, they formed themselves into a *Dharma Sabha*, or Religious Society,—in evident contrast to the *Brahmo Sabha* of Rammohun and his friends. They subscribed 11,260 rupees on the spot, and decided to erect a meeting place.* The purpose of the association was manifestly militant. It was to enable "the excellent and the noble"—so ran the explanation of their own organ—to "unite and continually devise means for protecting our religion and our excellent customs and usages." At its first meeting the treasurer significantly remarked with "the concurrence of all present" that "those Hindus who do not follow the rites of Hindu religion should be excluded from the Hindu Society." "No names, however, were mentioned," —a reticence which the *Chundrika* hoped would ere long be

* [Many of the rich and influential inhabitants of Calcutta joined the *Sabha*. The row of carriages in front of the hall on the day of the meeting extended to about a mile, and the organisers confidently declared that they would crush the Brahma Sabha as the fisherwoman crushes a small fish under her thumb—Edi.]

laid aside. Rammohun was made to feel how much mischief lurked behind these threats.

The *Abstract of the Arguments regarding the Burning of Widows considered as a Religious Rite*, which was issued in 1830, may be taken as his rejoinder to the manifesto of the 128 pundits. He wished to gather into a clear and concise epitome for popular use the points which had been scattered through many essays and tracts. These he grouped under three heads. According to the sacred books of Hindus, Concremation was (1) not obligatory but at most optional; (2) not the most commendable but the least virtuous act a widow could perform; and (3) must be a voluntary ascending of the pile and entering into the flames—a mode never practised in the conventional Suttee. The tract concludes with devout "thanks to Heaven, whose protecting arm has rescued our weaker sex from cruel murder," and "our character as a people" from international opprobrium.

While his campaign against Suttee was drawing to this triumphant conclusion, Rammohun Roy was busily engaged in other directions as champion of Indian rights and interests. We find him writing on August 18th, 1828, to Mr. J. Crawford, and entrusting to him petitions for presentation to both Houses of Parliament, signed by Hindus and Mohammedans, against the new Jury Act which came into operation in the beginning of 1827. He thus concisely states the grounds of grievance:—

In his famous Jury Biil, Mr. Wynn, the late President of the Board of Control, has by introducing religious distinctions into the judicial system of this country, not only afforded just grounds for dissatisfaction among the Natives in general, but has excited much alarm in the breast of everyone conversant with political principles. Any Natives, either Hindu or Mohamedan, are rendered by this Bill subject to judicial trial by Christians, either European or Native, while Christians, including Native Converts, are exempted from the degradation of being tried either by a Hindu or Mussulman juror, however high he may stand in the

estimation of society. This Bill also denies both to Hindus and Mussulmans the honor of a seat in the Grand Jury even in the trial of fellow-Hindus or Mussulmans. This is the sum total of Mr. Wynn's late Jury Bill, of which we bitterly complain.

In this letter Rammohun shows once more how deeply the analogy between Ireland and India and the prospects of nationalism in both countries had impressed him. Had not Mr. Wynn seen misery enough result in Ireland from making civil discriminations between different religious beliefs? Why should he want to reproduce the same calamities in India? Rammohun goes on to suggest a possibility which is by no means so remote now as when he wrote:—

Supposing that some 100 years hence the Native character becomes elevated from constant intercourse with Europeans and the acquirements of general and political knowledge as well as of modern arts and sciences, is it possible that they will not have the spirit as well as the inclination to resist effectually unjust and oppressive measures serving to degrade them in the scale of society? It should not be lost sight of that the position of India is very different from that of Ireland, to any quarter of which an English fleet may suddenly convey a body of troops that may force its way in the requisite direction and succeed in suppressing every effort of a refractory spirit. Were India to share one fourth of the knowledge and energy of that country, she would prove from her remote situation, her riches and her vast population, either useful and profitable as a willing province, an ally of the British Empire, or troublesome and annoying as a determined enemy.

In common with those who seem partial to the British rule from the expectation of future benefits arising out of the connection, I necessarily feel extremely grieved in often witnessing Acts and Regulations passed by Government without consulting or seeming to understand the feelings of its Indian subjects and without considering that this people have had for more than half a century the advantage of being ruled by and associated with an enlightened nation, advocates of liberty and promoters of knowledge.

In default of other means of making their voice heard, the natives of India resolved to petition, and invoked the help of friends like Mr. Crawford.

We have quoted this letter at some length because of the far-sighted glance into the future it reveals. There is here in germ the national aspiration which is now breaking forth into cries for "representation of India in the Imperial Parliament." "Home Rule for India," and even "India for the Indians." The prospect of an educated India, of an India approximating to European standards of culture, seems to have never been long absent from Rammohun's mind; and he did, however vaguely, claim in advance for his countrymen the political rights which progress in civilization inevitably involves. Here again Rammohun stands forth as the tribune, and prophet of the New India.*

But his nationalism was of no narrow type. It was not bound up with the interests of a few well-to-do classes. It was ready to welcome in the interests of the labouring masses, an extensive importation of European settlers and European capital. An outcry of the baser order of nationalism having been raised against the indigo planters of Bengal, Rammohun came boldly to the defence of those aspersed Europeans. His *Sambad Kaumudi* pointed out that indigo plantations had led to waste lands being cultivated, and to the freedom and comfort of the lower classes being increased. The peasants receiving a higher salary from the planters were no longer "victims to the whims of zemindars and great banians." The more numerous and permanent the settlement of European gentlemen, the better for the soil, the better also for the poor and middle classes. Writing (Nov. 12, 1829) in

* It is interesting to note that the petition in question was presented to the House of Commons, June 5,1829, by Mr. Wynn, and the promise of the Government to direct its attention thereto was made by Lord Ashley, then a Commissioner of the Board of Control, and afterwards Lord Shaftesbury. The young philanthropist "acknowledged the advantages which had been derived from admitting the natives of India to take a part in the administration of justice."

answer to certain inquiries on the subject from Mr. Nathaniel Alexander, and speaking from investigations he had instituted for the purpose, Rammohun said:—

The advances made to ryots by the indigo planters have increased in most factories in consequence of the price of indigo having risen, and in many, better prices than formerly are allowed for the plant.......I am positively of opinion that upon the whole the indigo planters have done more essential good to the natives of Bengal than any other class of persons. This is a fact which I will not hesitate to affirm whenever I may be questioned on the subject either in India or Europe. I at the same time must confess that there are individuals of that class of society who either from hasty disposition or want of due discretion have proved obnoxious to those who expected milder treatment from them. But, my dear sir, you are well aware that no general good can be effected without some partial evil, and in this instance I am happy to say that the former greatly preponderates over the latter. If any class of the natives "would gladly see them all turned out of the country," it would be the zemindars in general, since in many instances the planters have successfully protected the ryots against the tyranny and oppression of thir landlord.

Rammohun also attended a public meeting in the Calcutta Town Hall on the 15th of December, 1829, which was called to petition Parliament "to throw open the China and India trade, and to remove the restrictions against the settlement of Europeans in India." He reiterated the strong statements of his letter, and prefaced them with the weighty remark:—

From personal experience, I am impressed with the conviction that the greater our intercourse with European gentlemen, the greater will be our improvement in literary, social, and political affairs; a fact which can be easily proved by comparing the condition of those of my countrymen who have enjoyed this advantage with that of those who unfortunately have not had that oportunity; and a fact which I could to the best of my belief declare on solemn oath before any assembly.

In suggestive contrast with this defence of the European settler against the propertied classes of Bengal, we may set Rammohun's vindication of the Bengali law of the transmission of property against the findings of the British Court. British judges had wavered in their interpretation of the

Hindus' power of alienation over ancestral property. About this time (1829—1830) Sir C. E. Grey, then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, declared in favour of limiting the power in question. Rammohun accordingly brought out a book in 1830 on *The Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property according to the law of Bengal.* This essay showed that of the two great treatises on the law of Hindu inheritance, the Mitakshara was accepted throught the greater part of India, while the Dayabhaga had been long established as paramount authority in Bengal. Numerous instances were quoted to indicate the difference and even contrariety of the two codes; and on the crucial point it was shown that the Mitakshara limited the disposl of ancestral real property by requiring the consent of son and grandson, whereas the Dayabhaga left a man free to alienate it as he pleased. Recent decisions in British Bengali Courts had ignored the distinctive and established Bengali law and had followed the teachings of the Mitakshara. This breach of loyalty to Bengali institutions could not be excused by appeals to sayings in the Hindu scriptures, which imposed moral limits on power of alienation. These were ethical precepts, not legal enactments; and a vast amount of learning is expended in maintaining the legal validity of the Bengali digest along with the ethical authority of the sacred writings. In disputing the principle that "we ought to make that invalid which was considered immoral," Rammohun suggested a number of testing cases, one of which reads curiously in the light of later agitation:—

> To permit the sale of intoxicating drugs and spirits, so injurious to health, and even sometimes destructive of life, on the payment of duties publicly levied, is an act highly irreligious and immoral. Is the taxation to be, therefore, rendered invalid and payments stopped ?

This eassy involved its writer in a lengthy correspondence in the *Hurkaru*, with a critic who signed himself "A Hindu" ;

which led to a plentiful display of legal lore and casuistry, but did not modify Rammohun's main contention. That was indeed confirmed by the Sudder Dewany Adawlut in 1831, and still later by the Privy Council. Jogendra Chunder Ghose thinks this result to have been in large measure due to Rammohun's treatise.

Amid the multiplicity of these pursuits, philanthropic political, economic and legal, Rammohun never lost sight of his central vocation,—to purify and elevate the faith of his countrymen. In 1829 he published a tract entitled, *The Universal Religion; Religious Instructions founded on Sacred Authorities.* This is a short catechism, with proof texts from the sacred writings of Hinduism. It describes worship as "a contemplation of the attributes of the Supreme Being." It styles the object of worship "the author and Governor of the Universe," "imperceptible and indefinable," but by His creation and government of the universe known to exist. Worship is to be performed "by bearing in mind that the Author and Governor of this visible Universe is the Supreme Being and comparing this idea with the sacred writings and with reason.'' Furthermore "it is proper to regulate our food and conduct agreeably to the sacred writings." For this worship "a suitable place is certainly preferable, but not necessary" ; "in whatever place, towards whatever quarter or at whatever time the mind is best at rest, that place, that quarter, and that time is the most proper." This kind of worship cannot be hostile to any other kinds, nor can they reasonably be hostile to it; "for all believe the object whom they adore to be the Author and Governor of the Universe."

This is a bold statement to make in face of the facts of fetichism and kindred cults. The infinitely diverse religions of the world will scarcely yield as their common denominator a Theism so pure and lofty as Rammohun's "Universal

Religion." But Rammohun believed in it intensely and the progress of the Brahmo Sabha was witness to his faith.

The time had in fact arrived for providing the new Community with a permanent home of its own. The growth in the funds at its disposal soon rendered possible the purchase of a site in Chitproe Road and the erection of a building (a "brick-built messuage.") The Trust Deed, which is dated January 8th, 1830, sets forth the transfer of the property as *from* Dwarkanauth Tagore, Kaleenauth Roy, Prussunnocoomar Tagore, Ramchunder Bidyabagish, and Rammohun Roy, *to* the three Trustees, Boykontonauth Roy, Radapersuad Roy, and Ramanauth Tagore. The sum paid to the vendors for the site and building is stated to be ten Sicca Rupees (about one guinea) and for the appurtenances five Sicca Rupees more. Whether this nominal sale followed on a prior and more costly purchase, or was tantamount to a real gift does not appear. Possibly the five vendors did make a present of the house and ground*; and the funds which had been gathered were invested as an endowment on the place. Certainly "the sum of Rupees, 6,080, was kept in the custody of the late well-known firm of Messrs. Mackintosh & Company as a permanent fund, from the interest of which the ordinary expenses of the church were to be met"†

The Trust Deed of this place of worship is a notable theological document. It is the one legal statement of the

* In a *Sketch of the Brahmo Somaj* dated 1873, the authoress says of Rammohun, "He bought a house in Chitpore Road, endowed it with a small fund for the maintenance of public worship . . . and placed the whole in the hands of trustees." Dr. George Smith in his *Life of Dr. Duff* states that Rammohun "had himself erected the new building." The names of vendors and trustees are spelled as above in the Trust Deed.

† K. C. Sen in the *Indian Mirror*, July 1, 1865.

original creed of the Brahmo Samaj; and being inspired by Rammohun Roy, it falls to be quoted here as the formal deliverance of the purpose of his life-work. The terms of the Trust are that the trustees

Shall at all times permit the said building, land, tenements, hereditaments and premises, with their appurtenances, to be used, occupied, enjoyed, applied and appropriated, as and for a place of Public Meeting, of all sorts and descriptions of people, without distinction, as shall behave and conduct themselves in an orderly, sober, religious, and devout manner;

For the worship and adoration of the Eternal, Unsearchable, and Immutable Being, who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe, but not under, or by any other name, designation, or title, peculiarly used for, and applied to, any particular Being, or Beings, by any man, or set of men, whatsoever;

And that no graven image, statue or sculpture, carving, painting, picture, portrait or the likeness of any thing, shall be admitted within the messuage, building, land, tenements, hereditaments, and premises; and that no sacrifice, offering, or oblation of any kind or thing, shall ever be permitted therein; and that no animal or living creature shall, within or on the said messuage, building, land, tenements, hereditaments and premises, be deprived of life, either for religious purposes or for food;

And that no eating or drinking (except such as shall be necessary, by any accident, for the preservation of life), feasting or rioting be permitted therein or thereon;

And that, in conducting the said worship or adoration, no object, animate or inanimate, that has been, or is, or shall hereafter become, or be recognized, as an object of worship, by any man, or set of men, shall be reviled, or slightingly or contemptuously spoken of, or alluded to, either in preaching, praying, or in the hymns, or other mode of worship that may be delivered or used in the said messuage or building;

And that no sermon, preaching, discourse, prayer or hymn be delivered, made or used in such worship, but such as have a tendency to the promotion of the contemplation of the Author and Preserver of the Universe, to the promotion of charity, morality, piety, benevolence, virtue, and the strengthening the bonds of union between men of all religious persuasions and creeds;

And also, that a person of good repute, and well-known for his knowledge, piety, and morality, be employed by the said trustees . . . as

a resident superintendent, and for the purpose of superintending the worship so to be performed, as is hereinbefore stated and expressed; and that such worship be performed daily, or at least as often as once in seven days.

On January 23rd, 1830, the building was solemnly set apart to the purposes of public worship. Mr. Montgomery Martin, in his *History of the British Colonies* gives this account of the ceremony: "The institution was opened by the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, accompanied by the writer, (the only European present) in 1830. There were about five hundred Hindus present and among them many Brahmins who, after the prayers and singing of hymns had been concluded, received gifts in money to a considerable extent."

Rammohun must have taken part in this inauguration with a devoutly thankful heart. It was a sign that the movement of religious reform to which he had given his life had attained something like permanency. The society he had founded was showing itself to be no evanescent group of atoms, but a veritable Church. It had passed from the stage of dream and hope, through a series of tentative and preliminary experiments, into a solid materialized fact; an institution legally in possession of property; and the endowment settled upon it suggested a prospect of perpetuity. The decisive significance attached to the acquisition of this "local habitation" is shown in its annual celebration by all branches of the Somaj. The Society itself was founded, as we have seen, on the 20th of August, 1828. The building was opened on the 23rd of January, 1830. Yet, though at first the earlier event was yearly commemorated as the Church's birthday, the 23rd of January, soon came to be observed as the proper anniversary, and Brahmos have generally reckoned from 1830 as the era of the Somaj.

The same year shows us the founder assisting, with characteristic breadth of sympathy, at the beginning of another and widely different religious movement. The great educational

departure in Indian missions which is for ever associated with the name of Alexander Duff may boast of Rammohun Roy as its co-initiator. It will be remembered that six years previously the Hindu had, as an attendant on St. Andrew's Kirk, supported a petition to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, begging it to send out missionaries to British India. In response to this plea, the young Scotsman, hereafter so famous, arrived in Calcutta and was soon directed by his friends to the "pleasant garden house in a leafy suburb of Calcutta" where dwelt the "Erasmus of India."* Duff having unfolded his plans, Rammohun expressed general approval. "All true education," he said, "ought to be religious, since the object was not merely to give information but to develop and regulate all the powers of the mind, the emotions of the heart, and the workings of the conscience. Though not himself a Christian by profession, he had read and studied the Bible and declared that, as a book of religious and moral instruction, it was unequalled. As a believer in God, he also felt that everything should be begun by imploring His blessing. He recommended the opening of the proposed school with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer, for in all his reading he "nowhere found any prayer so brief and all-comprehensive" as it. A very significant remark must be quoted entire:—

"As a youth," he said to Mr. Duff, "I acquired some knowledge of the English language. Having read about the rise and progress of Christianity in apostolic times, and its corruption in succeeding ages, and then of the Christian Reformation which shook off these corruptions and restored it to its primitive purity, I began to think that something similar might have taken place in India, and similar results might follow here from a reformation of the popular idolatry."

On the young missionary saying that he was at a loss where or how to get a school-house in the native city, Ram-

* For this suggestive title and for the following incidents see Dr. George Smith's *Life of Dr. Duff*.

mohun offered the small hall in Chitpore Road, which the Brahmo Sabha was on the point of leaving for the new building; and driving off at once to the spot secured it for Duff at a rental of £4 a month, one pound less than he himself had been paying. He removed other difficulties from Duff's path. By personal influence among his enlightened Hindu friends, he secured their children for Duff's first pupils. On the day of opening,—the 13th of July, 1830—Rammohun Roy was present from the first to explain away prejudices. Duff's repetition of the Lord's Prayer in Bengali passed without remark, but a murmur arose among the pupils, when he put copies of the Gospels into their hands and bade them read. Rammohun straightway intervened :—

"Christians like Dr. Horace Hayman Wilson have studied the Hindu Shasters and you know that he has not become a Hindu. I myself have read all the Koran again and again ; and has that made me a Mussulman ? Nay, I have studied the whole Bible, and you know I am not a Christian. Why then do you fear to read it ? Read it and judge for yourselves."

This quieted the remonstrants; but Rammohun was careful to attend every day at ten when the Bible lesson was taken, for the whole of the next month and frequently afterwards,—a very signal evidence of his determination to promote the success of Duff's work. His powerful example soon told. For instance, one of his principal followers, Kaleenath Ray Chowdery, offered buildings and appliances at Taki, forty miles from Calcutta, for a school to be supervised by Duff and taught on his lines by his teachers, who would be paid by the Chowdery family, for Bengali and Persian instruction. This was the beginning of a thriving mission school. Duff might well say in a letter intended to introduce Rammohun Roy to Dr. Chalmers, "He has rendered me the most valuable and efficient assistance in prosecuting some of the objects of the General Assembly's Mission."

While these events were proceeding, Rammohun was making arrangements for his long expected journey to Europe. It was a somewhat unlooked-for occurrence which precipitated his intentions of travel. The Emperor of Delhi, nominal successor to the traditions of the Great Mogul, had a grievance against the real possessors of empire,—the Directors of the British Company. The allowance they granted His Majesty was, he considered, neither equal to the amount guaranteed to him by treaty, nor sufficient for his needs; and strangely exaggerated stories were circulated about the straits to which the Imperial household was reduced. Having possibly heard of his intended visit to England, the aggrieved potentate decided to appoint Rammohun as his envoy to the British King, to plead for measures of substantial redress. At the same time—apparently about the beginning of August, 1829—he conferred on him the tittle of ajah. Rammohun, after accepting these honours, took as his assistant in the Imperial service Mr. Montgomery Martin. This gentleman was editor of the *Bengal Herald*, an English newspaper, of which Dwarkanath Tagore, N. R. Holdar and Rammohun Roy became, in 1829, the proprietors. This journalistic venture, it seems, did not prosper. Rammohun, as proprietor, was obliged to plead guilty in the Supreme Court of Calcutta to a libel on an attorney, and the paper soon afterwards ceased to appear, Mr. Martin relinquishing his editorship for new duties under the Imperial envoy. According to a facetious and decidedly malicious but evidently well informed writer in the *John Bull* of Feb. 27, 1830,* the envoy and ex-editor had first arranged to leave for Europe about the beginning of September, 1829. A month later they decided to go overland *via* Allahabad, but for three months Mr. Martin waited in daily readiness to depart. Meantime the Regulation abolish-

* Quoted in the *Asiatic Journal* for August in the same year.

ing Suttee had been passed, and Rammohun was busily engaged, as we have seen, in supporting the action of the Governor General.

The threatened appeal to England of the infuriated supporters of the doomed rite furnished another reason for Rammohun's contemplated journey. His presentation of counter memorials and personal influence in the capita lof the Empire would help to circumvent their machinations. A further ground, doubtless present to his mind from the first, was the approaching expiry of the East India Company's Charter. His presence on the spot might help the House of Commons to shape the new Charter more favourably to Indian needs. Rammohun thought the time propitious for approaching the Governor-General on the subject of his errand. On January 8, 1830, while petitions were being actively promoted on both sides of the Suttee question, he wrote Lord Bentinck as follows:—

I beg leave to submit to your Lordship that some months ago I was informed by His Majesty, Ukoonnussur Moeenoodeen Mohoonmud Ukbur Badshah, that His Majesty had apprised your Lordship of my appointment as his Elchee (Envoy) to the Court of Great Britain, and of his having been pleased to invest me as His Majesty's servant with the title of Rajah, in consideration of the respectability attached to that situation, &c. Not being anxious for titular distinction, I have hitherto refrained from availing myself of the honour conferred on me by His Majesty.

His Majesty, however, being of opinion that it is essentially necessary for the dignity of His Royal House that I, as the representative thereof to the most powerful Monarch in Europe, and Agent for the settlement of His Majesty's affairs with the Honourable East India Company, should be invested with the title above mentioned, has graciously forwarded to me a seal engraved for the purpose at Delhi. I therefore take the liberty of laying the subject before your Lordship, hoping that you will be pleased to sanction my adoption of such title accordingly. This measure will, I believe, be found consistent with former usage as established by a Resoution of Government on the subject in 1827, when, at the recommendation of the then Resident, Sir Charles Metcalfe, in his report of 26th

June of that year, His Majesty's power of conferring honorary titles on his own servants was fully recognized.—I have the honour, &c.

Answer to this request was sent by Secretary Stirling on the 15th of January, to the effect that the Governor in Council could not sanction his acceptance of the title of Rajah nor recognise him as envoy from the Court of Delhi. We can hardly wonder at this reply, when we remember that Rammohun's mission was at once a deviation from the usual official channels of communication with the Home Government and a reflection upon the conduct of officials. Both as to form and substance it stood condemned in the official eye. It is pleasant to find that this rebuff did not hinder Rammohun appearing next day at the Governor-General's with the Anti-Suttee address of congratulation.

With the beginning of the last year which Rammohun was to spend on Indian soil, the resentment which his reforming career had been steadily accumulating in the breasts of orthodox Hindus broke out into threats and plots of mortal violence. It was the abolition of Suttee which let loose the floods of reactionary fury. Avarice and bigotry, two of the strongest passions of human nature, had been hard hit; and they demanded a victim. Rammohun was marked out as the guilty party. He was the traitor within the gates, who had sold the keys to the infidel oppressor. Therefore he must die.

So doubtless argued his enemies. Their intentions were, however, conveyed to Rammohun. About the new year he informed Mr. Martin that "his life was seriously threatened by a gang of assassins." Mr. Martin accordingly took up his abode at his patron's house and armed the household. "Firearms, gunpowder, and daggers were immediately procured and burkendauzes employed to guard the premises." These last were daily exercised in firing. Whenever Rammohun went into town, he took with him dagger

and swordstick, and was accompanied by Mr. Martin, who carried swordstick and pistols, and by other armed attendants.* We learn from other sources that twice attempts were made on his life, and he was dogged about by spies, who even dared to tear holes in his walls to watch him in his privacy, in the hope of detecting some act which would render him an out-caste.

The militant forces of reaction were organized by the *Dharma Sabha*, started, as we have seen, only six days before the opening of the *Brahmo Sabha* building; and the antagonism between the two societies, each with an influential following, each with its popular newspaper, made a great stir, of which Siva Nath Sastri in his history of the Brahmo Somaj gives us this lively picture:

> The common people became participators in this great conflict; for the tracts of the reformers, mostly written in the simplest Bengali, appeals to them as much as to the enlightened classes. In the bathing-ghats of the river side, in market-places and public squares, in the drawing-rooms of influential citizens, everywhere the rivalry between the two associations became the subject of talk. Lines of comical poetry caricaturing the principles of the great reformer were composed by the wags of the time, and passed from mouth to mouth until the streets rang with laughter and ridicule. The agitation spread from Calcutta to the interior, and everywhere the question was discussed between the two parties. A large number of Brahmins who accepted presents from the members of the *Brahmo Sabha*, were excommunicated by the other party on that account, and the duty of supporting them devolved upon the rich of Rammohun's friends, who cheerfully undertook it. It was in the midst of these furious party contests that Rammohun opened his church in 1830.

One of the favourite subjects of satire and ridicule was Rammohun's intended visit to Furope.

It is no small tribute to the character of our hero that amid all this storm of obloquy and in peril of his life he

* So the scoffing writer in the *John Bull* quoted above whose narrative is too circumstantial to be readily open to doubt.

calmly pursued his reforming course. Charges of cowardice and of time-serving have been plentifully hurled against him: but they find slight room for lodgement in the conduct of a man who, surrounded by virulent calumny and mortal menace, went on presenting addresses and publishing books and preparing memorials against Suttee, housed and endowed his *Sabha*, and even dared to launch Duff's great scheme of Christian education.

Nevertheless the "hatred, scoffing and abuse" to which he was subjected must have made him less sorry to leave India. How his plans for departure had matured appears from the following letter, in which the Hindu Reformer bids a stately farewell to the British ruler, whose name the abolition of Suttee has linked with his own in everlasting conjunction:—

From the kindness I have so often experienced from your Lordship, I trust to be pardoned for my present intrusion in a matter solely concerning myself, but in which your Lordship's condescension has induced me to persuade myself that you are pleased to take some interest.

Having at length surmounted all the obstacles of a domestic nature that have hitherto opposed my long cherished intention of visiting England, I am now resolved to proceed to that land of liberty by one of the vessels that will sail in November, and from a due regard to the purport of the late Mr. Secretary Stirling's letter of 15th January last, and other considerations, I have determined not to appear there as the Envoy of His Majesty Akbar the Second, but as a private individual.

I am satisfied that in thus divesting myself of all public character, my zealous services in behalf of His Majesty need not be abated. I even trust that their chance of success may be improved by being thus exempted from all jealousy of a political nature to which they might by misapprehension be subjected.

As public report has fixed an early day in October for your Lordship's departure to examine personally into the condition of the inhabitants of the Upper Provinces, I take the present occasion as the last that may offer in this country for the expression of my sincere wishes for your Lordship's success in all your philanthropic designs for the improvement and benefit of my countrymen. I need not add that any commands for

England with which your Lordship may honour me shall receive from me the most respectful attention, and I beg to subscribe myself your Lordship's most humble and grateful servant.

The "obstacles of a domestic nature" may, perhaps, be the suit of the Rajah of Burdwan, which was not finally dismissed by the last Court of Appeal—the Sudder Dewanee Adaulut—until November of next year, but the issue of which may have now been confidently foreseen. It is interesting to know that, on leaving, Rammohun charged his sons to forget the conduct of their cousins who had shared in this forensic persecution.

Having completed all arrangements for his departure, Rammohun sailed from Calcutta by the *Albion* on the 19th of November. Careful even in this daring innovation on Brahman custom, to observe the laws of caste, he took with him Hindu servants to prepare his food and two cows to supply him with milk. Rammohun also took with him an adopted son, a boy of about twelve years, who was known as Ram Roy or Rajaram. Malicious gossip did not spare this lad's origin. Chunder Sekhar Deb—the disciple who, it will be remembered, suggested the formation of the Brahmo Somaj—stated in conversation with a friend, R. D.H, at Burdwan, so late as January, 1863, that "rumour had it that at one time he [Rammohun] had a mistress; and people believed that Rajaram was his natural son, though he himself said Rajaram was the orphan of a Durwan of some Saheb, and Rammohun Roy brought him up."

This scandalous insinuation emerges here in our sources for the first and only time, and then some thirty years after Rammohun's death. We have not come across the remotest semblence of evidence to sustain the charge.* True, Mr. Deb

* The true history of Rajaram was supplied to Dr. Carpenter in the following letter from India in 1835 :—"you ask me to give you any corrections (of Dr. C.'s Sermon and Review) that may appear necessary.

was an intimate disciple ; but the rest of his reported conversation shows him to be no loyal admirer of the deceased master. And even he advanced no scintilla of proof. He merely repeated the gossip as "rumour" and what "people believed." There is no need to question his veracity. Orthodox Hindus of the Dharma Sabha type were thirsting to show up the great apostate, as they regarded him, in the blackest of colours. The fact that his wives had deserted him, and the presence of this adopted son, offered a combination of circumstances which eager malice could scarcely fail to construe in its own way. Men who made attempts on Rammohun's life were not likely to scruple about attacking his reputation. And against this rumour, so easily explained, we have to set the unanimous testimony of British missionaries to Rammohun's pure moral habits. An intimate friend like Mr. William Adam, who was closely questioned by Unitarian

One has been suggested to me by his native friends, as desirable to be made for the sake of Rammohun's Roy's character. The boy Rajah whom he took with him to England is not his son, not even an adopted son according to the Hindoo form of adoption ; but a destitute orphan whom he was led by circumstances to protect and educate. I have a distinct recollection of the particular circumstances under which he stated to me Raja came into his hands. And my recollection is confirmed by that of others. Mr. Dick, a civil servant of the company found the child helpless and forsaken at one of the fairs at Hurdwar, where from two to three hundred thousand people annually congregated. It is not known whether the parents lost or forsook him, but Mr. Dick had him clothed and fed, and when he was under the necessity of leaving the country for the recovery of health, he consulted with Rammohun Roy how the child should be disposed of. I well recollect our late friend's benevolent exclamation : 'When I saw an Englishman, a Christian, thus caring for the welfare of a poor orphan, could I, a native, hesitate to take him under my care and provide for him?' Mr. Dick never returned to India, having, died, I belive, on the passage to England and the child remained with Rammohun Roy." Edi.]

correspondents about Rammohun's domestic relations, could scarcely have been mistaken in his uniformly high estimate of the Reformer's character. And his aggrieved Trinitarian opponents, even in the heat of controversy, never breathe a whisper against his fair fame. The reputation that has passed scatheless and stainless the ordeal of criticism by missionaries, Baptist and Unitarian, Presbyterian and Anglican, hostile as well as sympathetic, may afford to ignore stale Hindu gossip served up a generation afterwards.

Rammohun was also accompanied by two Hindu servants, by name Ramhurry Doss and Ramrotun Mukerjee. The latter as cook was entrusted with the duty of providing his master with food prepared in accordance with caste regulations.

Some extracts from Mr. J. Young's letter of introduction to Jeremy Bentham (of date Nov. 14, 1830) may fitly close this chapter :—

If I were beside you, and could explain matters fully, you would comprehend the greatness of the undertaking—his going on board ship to a foreign and distant land, a thing hitherto not to be named among Hindoos, and least of all among Brahmins. His grand object, besides the natural one of satisfying his own laudable spirit of inquiry, has been to set a laudable example to his benighted countrymen; and every one of the slow and gradual moves that he has made preparatory to his actually quitting India, has been marked by the same discretion of judgment. He waited patiently until he had by perseverence and exertion acquired a little but respectable party of disciples. He talked of going to England from year to year since 1823* to familiarize the minds of the orthodox by degrees to this step, and that his friends might in the meantime increase in numbers and in confidence. . . He now judges that the time is come, and that the public mind is pretty well ripe for his exploit. . .

The good which this excellent and extraordinary man has already effected by his writings and example cannot be told. But for his exertions

* [The idea was present in his mind from the year 1817 at the latest, for in that year in a letter to Mr. Digby he makes mention of it. Edi.]

Suttee would be in full vigour at the present day, and the influence of the priesthood in all its ancient force ;—he has given the latter a shake from which, aided by education and the spirit of bold inquiry gone forth among the Hindoos, it can never recover. . . . He is withal one of the most modest men I have ever met with. . .

It is no small compliment to such a man that even a Governor-General like the present, who, though a man of the most honest intentions, suspects everyone and trusts nobody, and who knows that R. M. R. greatly disapproves of many of the acts of the Government, should have shewn him so much respect as to furnish him with introductions to friends of rank and political influence in England.

CHAPTER VIII.

(1830-1833.)

Embassy to Europe.

1830.—Nov. 19—Rammohun sails from Calcutta.

1831—January—Calls at Cape Town. April 8—Arrives in Liverpool, visits Manchester, and reaches London. May and July—Resides in Regent Street. May—Addresses Unitarian Association. July 6—Dines with East India Company. Removes residence to Bedford Square. Aug. 19—*Revenue System of India.* Sept. 19—*Judicial System of India.* Sept. 28—*Condition of India.* Sept.—Is presented to the King.

1832.—June—Reform Bill finally passed. July 14—*Settlement of India* by Europeans. October—Rammohun Roy in Paris.

1833.—January—In London again. First Reformed Parliament meets. July 11—Appeal against the abolition of Suttee rejected by Parliament. July 24—East India Bill read a third time in the Commons. Aug. 20—Received Royal Assent. Slavery Emancipation Act. Factory Act. September—R. Roy leaves London for Stapletòn Hill, near Bristol. Sept. 9—Mr. Estlin called in. Sept. 27—Death of R. Roy. Oct. 18—His Burial.

The significance of Rammohun Roy's visit to Europe can scarcely be exaggerated. At first sight indeed it is in some danger of being overlooked. We are tempted to consider the last three years of the Reformer's life a mere appendix or postscript to a career already complete. We are apt to suppose the full tale of his great services for India made up when he left her soil. He had initiated the Hindu Theistic movement. He had given it permanent literary expression. He had selected or indicated the order of Scriptures more peculiarly its own. He had seen it finally housed and endowed. He had moreover successfully inaugurated native journalism. He had launched Dr. Duff's

great educational enterprise. The cause of English education which he had championed was now on the eve of official victory. And he had witnessed the abolition of Suttee. What follows these achievements may wear to the unreflective observer a semblance of anti-climax, or at best of mere stage pageant after the real work was done. But a deeper discernment will soon dissipate this impression. Rammohun's three years in the West form the crown and consummation of his life-work. They were spent away from the scene of his regular labours and under widely different conditions; they were shadowed by failing health and saddened by misplaced confidence; but they follow in strict logical and genetic succession. They complete the continuity. They supply the dramatic culmination of Rammohun's half century of service to his country and his kind.

The epoch they mark in Hindu development only confirms and extends his religious record. He was the first Brahman to cross the ocean. He was the first Hindu of eminence who dared to break the spell which for ages the sea had laid on India. He set a conspicuous precedent to the host of educated Hindus who have since studied and travelled in Europe. The consequences for his countrymen are such as to make this act alone sufficient to secure for its author a lasting distinction. Its Imperial importance is not less striking. Rammohun Roy's presence in this country made the English people aware, as they had never been before, of the dignity, the culture, and the piety of the race they had conquered in the East. India became incarnate in him, and dwelt among us, and we beheld her glory. In the court of the King, in the halls of the legislature, in the select coteries of fashion, in the society of philosophers and men of letters, in Anglican church and Nonconformist meeting-house, in the privacy of many a home, and before the wondering crowds of Lancashire operatives, Rammohun Roy stood forth the

visible and personal embodiment of our Eastern empire. Wherever he went, there went a stately refutation of the Anglo-Indian insolence which saw in an Indian fellow-subject only a "black man" or a "nigger." As he had interpreted England to India, so now he interpreted India to England. He was the first great representative of the Hindu race at the Seat of Empire, and the contrast between official London and official Calcutta in their treatment of him showed the effect of his personal presence at headquarters.*

He came, too, at a time of crucial transition in the political history of the United Kingdom. He was an eager and sympathetic spectator of the stupendous revolution achieved by the first Reform Bill. The process then began which

* [Miss Carpenter gives the following general summary of the impression of Raja's visit to England :—

"The arrival of the illustrious Hindu Reformer in our country was anxiously anticipated by all who had become acquainted with him through the various channels which have been laid before the reader. The nature of his labours, and the distance of the scene of them, naturally prevented his being an object of popular enthusiasm ; nor if that had been excited in his fovour, would he have desired the public demonostrations of admiration and respect which were recently accorded to the great Italian patriot. But the reception given to him though of a widely different kind, must have been no less gratifying to him, at the time, and to his countrymen since his departure. The highest honours were publicly accorded to him, and a place was awarded to him among the foreign ambassadors at the coronation of the sovereign ; persons the most remarkable for their social standing and literary eminence sought his society, and highly esteemed the privilege of intercourse with him ;—he was received into our English homes not only as a distinguished guest, but as a friend and when he was prostrated on the bed of sickness and of death in a foreign land, he was surrounded with the most loving attentions, tended with the most anxious solicitude, and finally laid in the grave surrounded with true mourners, who felt him akin to them in spirit, if not connected with him by the ties of earthly relationship." Last Days of Rammohun Roy p. 57.—Edi].

has by successive extentions of the franchise transformed the government of this nation in fifty years from a close oligarchy to a democracy. While he was here, he saw the East India Company changed by statute from a trading concern into a political organization : and that was practically the last renewal of its charter, prior to its replacement, in 1858, by the Imperial Government.* He saw the Act pass which abolished slavery throughout the British dominions. The period of his visit also covers the passing of the Factory Act and the beginnings of the Tractarian movement. The Manchester and Liverpool railway had been opened only a month or two before he left India. He was here, in a word, when the New England was being born out of the heart of Old England,—the New England of democracy, of social and industrial reform, of Anglican revival, and of Imperial policy tempered by Nonconformist Conscience. And at that decisive era, he was present as the noble and precocious type of the New India which has been growing up under British rule. In him the New England first became acquainted with the New India. That is a connection which has already borne much fruit, and which seems destined to play a greater part in the near future. And if we glance beyond the limits of India and of Empire, we can hardly fail to see in Rammohun's visit a landmark in the general history of modern civilization. The West had long gone to the East. With him the East began to come to the West. India has followed in his wake, and Japan and even China have followed in the wake of India. Leading scions of the hoariest civilizations are now eager pupils in the schools of the youngest civilizations. As a consequence the East is being rapidly Occidentalized ; and there are signs not a few of a gradual Orientalizing of the West. This movement towards

* The charter was tentatively renewed, subject to the pleasure of Parliament, in 1853.

the healing of the schism which has for ages divided mankind, and the effort to intermingle more thoroughly the various ingredients of humanity, are rich in promise for the humanizing and unifying of man. The role which Rammohun Roy had played in this world-drama among his own countrymen was fitly crowned by his appearance in the chief city of the globe.

We are anticipating, it is true, but in following the kaleidoscopic variety of the reformer's European experiences we need to keep clearly in mind the world-historic import of the entire event. Otherwise the unity and continuity of a great lifework might seem to be dissipated in a crowd of details.

The cosmopolitan character of the man received fresh and striking illustration from the direction of his mind during the time of his departure. He was not weighed down with the thought of separation from home and friends, or with vague forebodings as to the outcome of his momentous enterprise. He was simply full of the latest French Revolution. News had just reached Calcutta of the famous Three Days (July 27—29, 1830): and, "so great was his enthusiasm that," we are told, "he could think and talk of nothing else !" He viewed it as a triumph of liberty and rejoiced accordingly.

This is the testimony of James Sutherland, a friend of Rammohun, who sailed with him to England. His narrative of the voyage* sheds so interesting a light on the conduct of the great Hindu that we cannot do better than reproduce portions of it here.

On board ship Rammohun Roy took his meals in his own cabin, and at first suffered considerable inconvenience from the want of a separate fireplace, having nothing but a common *choola* on board. His servants, too, fell desperately sea-sick, (though, as if his ardour supported him

* Published in the *India Gazette*, Feb. 18, 1834.

23

against it, he himself never felt this malady at all) and took possession of his cabin, never moving from it, and making it as may easily be conceived, no enviable domicile; in fact they compelled him to retreat to the lockers; but still the kindness of his nature would not allow him to remove them. The greater part of the day he read, chiefly I believe, Sanskrit and Hebrew. In the forenoon and the evening he took an airing on deck, and always got involved in an animated discussion. After dinner when the cloth was removed and the dessert was on the table, he would come out of his cabin also and join in the conversation and take a glass of wine. He was always cheerful and so won upon the esteem of all on board that there was quite a competition who should pay him the most attention, and even the sailors seemed to render him any little service in their power. . . His equanimity was quite surprising. In more than one case everything in his cabin was quite afloat owing to the sea washing in . . . but it never disturbed his serenity. If anything threw him off his equilibrium of temperament, it was the prevalence of contrary winds, because of his anxiety to get on, and his alarm lest the great question of the Company's charter should come on before he arrived in England.

He put ashore at the Cape for only an hour or two. Returning on board, he met with a nasty accident. The gangway ladder had not been properly secured and he got a serious fall, "from which he was lame for eighteen months afterwards" and indeed never finally recovered.

But no bodily suffering could repress his mental ardour. Two French frigates, under the revolutionary flag, the glorious tri-colour, were lying in Table Bay; and lame as he was, he would insist on visiting them. The sight of these colours seemed to kindle the flame of his enthusiasm, and to render him insensible to pain. . . . His reception was, of course, worthy of the French character and of him. He was conducted over the vessels and endeavoured to convey by the aid of interpreters how much he was delighted to be under the banner that waved over their decks,—an evidence of the glorious triumph of right over might; and as he left the vessels he repeated emphatically "Glory, glory, glory to France!"

Some of the most distinguished people at the Cape left their cards for him at the Hotel, and some called on board, but *not* the Governor . . .

As we approached England, his anxiety to know what was passing there became most urgent, and he implored the captain to lose no oppor-

tunity of speaking any vessel outward. At length near the equator, . . we fell in with a vessel which supplied us with papers announcing the change of Ministry* and his exultation at the intelligence may be easily conceived. We talked of nothing else for days. . . It was in its probable beneficial effect on the fate of India that he regarded the event as a subject of triumph. When we got within a few days' sail of the Channel we fell in with a vessel only four days out, that brought us intelligence of the extraordinary circumstance of the second reading of the Refrom Bill being carried in the House in which the Tories had so long commanded majorities, by a single vote ! . . Rammohun Roy was again elated with the prospect. . . A few days afterwards, at that eventful crisis in our history . . Rammohun Roy first landed in Great Britain.

The effect of this contagious enthusiasm of a whole people in favour of a grand political change upon such a mind as his was of course electrifying, and he caught up the tone of the new society in which he found himself with so much ardour that at one time I had fears that this fever of excitement . . would prove too much for him. . .

Mr. Sutherland gives a vivid description of the first days of Rammohun Roy in England. He tells us,

His arrival † was no sooner known in Liverpool than every man of any distinction in the place hastened to call upon him, and he got into inextricable confusion with all his engagements, making half a dozen sometimes for the same evening. . . He was out morning, noon, and night. . . On all occasions, whether at breakfast or dinner, a number of persons was assembled to meet him ; and he was constantly involved in animated discussions on politics or theolgy. . .

* Lord Grey succeeded the Duke of Wellington as Prime Minister in November, 1830.

† [It was on April 8th, 1831, that Rajah Rammohun Roy landed at Liverpool. He was at once invited by William Rathbone, Esqr., to take up his residence at the hospitable abode of Greenbank, which has been honoured by the presence of so many illustrious strangers who have there found a home ; he preferred however to be independent, and at Radley's Hotel he was visited by many who desired at once to give him a respectful greeting.—Last Days of Rammohun Roy, p. 60. Edi].

The first public place Rammohun Roy attended was fitly enough a Unitarian Chapel, where a Mr. Grundy delivered a sermon "rather too metaphysical" for Mr. Sutherland, but greatly appreciated by the illustrious Hindu. It was a homily on the duty of unlimited charity in regard to other men's creeds.

"When the sermon was over the scene that ensued was curious. Instead of dispersing as usual, the congregation thronged up every avenue in crowding to get a near view of him as he passed out." On his way out, Rammohun was moved to sudden grief by the sight of a mural tablet in memory of a Mr. Tait whom he had known in India. On recovering from the shock,

He attempted to express his feelings, and as he did so with propriety, though with hesitation, the surprise and excitement of the crowd at hearing a native of India address them in their native tongue was extreme, and it was near an hour after the service terminated ere we could make our way out of church. . . He had to shake hands with many who had waited for that purpose. To some his adopted son was scarcely less an object of curiosity, and to him it was fine fun ; he seemed to enjoy being stared at amazingly.

At night Rammohun Roy went to an Anglican church, and heard the Rev. Mr. Scoresby, formerly a sailor, and now a man of great scientific reputation, and a good Evangelical. Of this discourse, too, the distinguished hearer expressed his admiration.

Among the earliest invitations received by Rammohun after his arrival was one to the house of William Roscoe. The venerable historian, who had been a prisoner through paralysis for many years, and was now within a few weeks of his end, had previously corresponded with Rammohun, read his writings, and earnestly longed to see him. The interview which resulted is described as exceedingly affecting.*

* [An account of this interesting interview is happily preserved in the Memoir of Roscoe by his son, Henry Roscoe, and is worth reproducing.

The first impression produced by the Hindu in the drawing-rooms of Liverpool magnates, as well as in more public places, seems to have been one of profound surprise.

To hear a Brahman zealously advocating Reform, and, with an earnestness and emphasis that bespoke his sincerity, expatiating on the blessings of civil and religious liberty, of course amazed our countrymen; and perhaps they were not less surprised, if the discussion took a religious turn, to find him quoting text upon text with the utmost facility,

"It will be recollected," says the biographer, "that at a very early period of his life Mr. Roscoe had collected the moral precepts of the New Testament into a small volume, to which he gave the title of 'Christian Morality, as contained in the Precepts of New Testament, in the language of Jesus Christ.' In the decline of life this youthful attempt was recalled to his mind by a work of a similar character proceeding from a very unlooked for quarter. This was the 'Precepts of Jesus' collected, arranged and published at Calcutta by a learned Brahmin Rammohun Roy....The character and history of this extraordinary man excited in the highest degree the interest and the admiration of Mr. Roscoe. It is not surprising that with a man of this high and enlightened character Mr. Roscoe should be desirous of communicating; and accordingly he took advantage of the opportunity of one of his friends proceeding to India, to transmit to Rammohun Roy a small collection of his works, which he accompanied with the following letter.......Before this letter could reach its destination Mr. Roscoe had the unexpected gratification of hearing that the extraordinary person to whom it was addressed was already on his voyage to Europe. This intelligence was quickly followed by his arrival at Liverpool, where his character and striking appearance excited much curiosity and interest. The interview between him and Mr. Roscoe will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. After the usual gesture of eastern salutation, and with a mixture of oriental expression, Rammohun Roy said, 'Happy and proud am I—proud and happy to behold a man whose fame has extended not only over Europe, but over every part of the world.' 'I bless God,' replied Mr. Roscoe, 'that I have been permitted to live to see this day.' Their conversation chiefly turned upon the objects which had led Rammohun Roy to this country, and in the course of it he displayed an intimate acquaintance with the political and commercial state of England." Edi].

and proving himself more familiar with their sacred books than themselves.

Two wealthy Quaker families, Cropper and Benson by name, paid him special attention, and brought him into social fellowship with persons of all faiths. At one of these Quaker parties "there were present High Churchmen, Baptists, Unitarians, and Deists, all meeting in perfect harmony and Christian charity." At the house of Mr. William Rathbone he met the phrenologist Spurzheim, with whom personally he was on excellent terms, but for whose "science" he had only good-humoured ridicule. Theology and politics were, as has been said, the favourite themes of colloquy ; but an attempt—at Mr. Rathbone's—to draw Rammohun into confession of his own precise religious conviction ended in failure.

The Rajah stayed only a few days in Liverpool. He was eager to be present in the House of Commons on the second reading of the Reform Bill. So he hurried on to London about the end of April. But his stay in Liverpool was a fitting prelude to the general tenour of his visit, and has therefore claimed slightly fuller notice.

The *eclat* of his first reception followed him on his way to the metropolis. Says Mr. Sutherland :—

The scene at Manchester, when he visited the great manufactories, was very amusing. All the workmen, I believe, struck work, and men, women, and children rushed in crowds to see "*the King of Ingee !*" Many of the great unwashed insisted upon shaking hands with him ; some of the *ladies* who had not stayed to make their toilets very carefully wished to embrace him, and he with difficulty escaped. . . The aid of the police was required to make way for him to the manufactories, and when he had entered, it was necessary to close and bolt the gate to keep out the mob. . . After shaking hands with hundreds of them he turned round and addressed them, hoping they would all support the King and his Ministers in obtaining Reform ; so happily had he caught the spirit of the people. He was answered with

loud shouts, "The King and Reform for ever !" On the road to London, wherever he stopped the inn was surrounded.

On the night of his arrival in the capital a rare honour awaited him. He got into London late in the evening, and being dissatisfied with the rooms assigned him in "a filthy inn in Newgate Street," went on to the Adelphi Hotel which he reached about ten o'clock. He had not told his friends when he was coming, but they had learned from other sources, and had prepared rooms for him at an hotel in Bond Street.

Yet, strange to say, long after he had retired to rest, the venerable Bentham, who had not for many years called on anyone or left his house, I believe, except to take his habitual walk in the garden, found his way to the hotel, and left a characteristic note for him.

This signal compliment from the leading British philosopher of the time must have greatly gratified the stranger.

Rammohun took up his residence at 125, Regent Street, and for some months held court there as real, if informal, Ambassador from the people of India.

As soon (says Sutherland) as it was known in London that the great Brahman philosopher had arrived, the most distinguished men in the country crowded to pay their respects to him ; and he had scarcely got into his lodgings in Regent Street, when his door was besieged with carriages from eleven in the morning till four in the afternoon ; until this constant state of excitement (for he caught the tone of the day and vehemently discussed politics with everyone) actually made him ill, . . when his physicians gave positive orders to his footman not to admit visitors.

He became, in short, the lion of the season, and the Dowager Duchess of Cork, a noted lion-hunter, early marked him out for her prey. Mr. Sutherland comments with surprise upon Rammohun's being "for a considerable time much more in Tory than in Whig circles," even being introduced into the House of Lords by the Duke of Cumberland. It was his urgent solicitations which prevented the Tory peers

voting against the Indian Jury Bill. Considering the round terms in which he rated the Tories to their face for opposing the Reform Bill, their hospitable behaviour towards him does them no small credit. "With Lord Brougham," Sutherland tells us, "he was on terms of the closest and most confidential intimacy * and, in short, he was honoured and esteemed by men of the most opposite opinions.''

That he should have been in great demand among the Unitarians, with whose leaders he had corresponded for years, and whose cause at home and abroad he had done so much to promote, was of course inevitable. He had not been long in

* [Mr. William Roscoe introduced Rammohun Roy on his arrival in England to Lord Brougham with the following letter :—"I have the great honour and very singular pleasure of introducing to your Lordship's kind notice and attention the bearer of this, the clebrated and learned Rammohun Roy, who is just arrived here from Calcutta, and of whom you must already have frequently heard as the illustrious convert from Hinduism to Christianity, and the author of the selections from the New Testament of "The Precepts of Jesus;" by the publication and diffusion of which amongst the natives of the East reasonable hopes are now entertained, that in a short time the shocking system and cruel practices of Paganism will be abolished, and the people of those populous regions be restored to the pure and simple precepts of morality and brotherly love. Amongst the many and important motives which have induced him to leave his country and connections, and visit this island, I understand he is induced to hope he may be of some assistance in promoting the cause of the natives of India in the great debate which must ere long take place here, respecting the Charter of the East India Company; but I have yet seen so little of him, from his numerous engagements here, that I must leave your Lordship to learn his intentions from himself, which you will find him very capable of explaining in his own strong and appropriate English idiom. One great reason, as I understand, for his haste to leave this for London, is to be present to witness the great measure that will be taken by your Lordship and your illustrious colleagues for promoting the long-wished-for reform of his native country. On the present occasion I will not trouble you farther than

London before a special meeting of the Unitarian Association was held in his honour.* He was welcomed by Dr. Carpenter and others as 'brother' and 'fellow-labourer.'† Rammohun had not yet recovered from the illness which his excessive popularity had brought on him, and responded with manifest exhaustion. A few sentences may be quoted from his brief speech :—

'With respect to your faith I may observe that I too believe in one God, and that I believe in almost all the doctrines that you do ; but I do this for my own salvation and for my own peace.' 'I have honour for the appellation of Christian.' 'Scripture seconds your system of religion, common sense is always on your side.' 'I am convinced that your success sooner or later is certain.'

to request, that, if it should not be inconsistent with your Lordship's station and convenience, you would obtain for our distinguished visitor the benefit of a seat under the gallery in the House of Commons on the debate on the third reading of the Reform Bill, which favour I am anxious he should owe rather to your Lordship (if you have no objection to it) than to other individuals, to whom, I understand, he has letters of introduction. Edi.]

* Probably in May. The proceedings are fully reported in the *Monthly Repository* for June, 1831.

† [The full report of this meeting, as recorded in the *Monthly Repository* is as follows :—

"Just at this period (after the proceedings had commenced) the Rajah Rammohun Roy made his appearance on the platform, and was greeted with the cordial applause of the meeting.

The Rev. Chairman (Robert Aspland)—Our illustrious friend (for such I trust he will allow me to call him) will permit me to state that his presence creates among us a sensation which he perhaps will hardly understand. It does so, because in his person and example we see an instance of the power of the human mind in recovering itself from the errors of ages ; and because we conceive that we see in him, with his intelligence and character, one of the best and most disinteresed judges of the claims of Unitarianism to be the original Christian doctrine.

* * * *

Dr. Bowring (afterwards Sir John Bowring)—I feel it as a very signal

Rammohun cotinued to the last in close communication or personal fellowship with the chief Unitarian families of the time, the Estlins, the Carpenters, the Foxes, and the like. We have a letter of his to Rev. W. J. Fox,* dated May 31, 1831, acknowledging with truly Oriental courtesy certain books which the author had sent him, and hoping for an interchange of visits "as soon as I am fully recovered"; and on June 10th, a note assuring Mr. Fox "it will give me more real gratification to visit you in your cottage, as you call it, than to visit a palace. But as I happen to be engaged for dinner every day till the 19th, I would prefer seeing you at breakfast. . . ." This shows us something of the throng of

honour to have entrusted to my care a resolution, the object of which is to welcome our illustrious oriental friend, and to communicate all we feel and hope towards him. I ought not to say all we feel and hope, for I am sure that it is impossible to give expression to those sentiments of interest and anticipation with which his advent here is associated in all our minds. I recollect some writers have indulged themselves with inquiring what they should feel if any of those time-honoured men whose names have lived through the vicissitudes of ages, should appear among them. They have endeavoured to imagine what would be their sensation if a Plato or a Socrates, a Milton or a Newton were unexpectedly to honour them with their presence. I recollect that a poet, who has well been called divine, has drawn a beautiful picture of the feelings of those who first visited the southern hemisphere, and there saw, for the first time, that beautiful constelltation, the Golden Cross. It was with feelings such as they underwent, that I was overwhelmed when I stretched out in your name the hand of welcome to the Rajah Rammohun Roy. In my mind the effect of distance is very like the effect of time; and he who comes among us from a country thousands of miles off, must be looked upon with the same interest as the illustrious men who lived thousands of years ago. But in the case of our friend, his coming may be deemed

* Editor of the *Monthly Repository*, friend and patron of Robert Browning, whose youthful Muse he was at this very time sedulously encouraging; he might almost be called the first man of any literary standing who discovered the poet.

social engagements which claimed Rammohun. The visit to breakfast was finally arranged, as we learn from a note of June 13th, in which the Rajah says, "I shall endeavour to bring my little youngster with me, agreeably to your kind request." He also thanks Mr. Fox for the sermon sent him, adding, "After the discourse which I had the supreme gratification of hearing delivered by you, I must read anything that comes from your pen both with interest and instruction."

an act of heroism of which the European cannot form a just estimate. When Peter the Great went forth to instruct himself in the civilization of the South,—when he left the barbarous honours of his own court to perfect himself in shipbuilding at Saardam, he presented himself to the public eye in a more illustrious manner than after any of his most glorious victories. But Peter had to overcome no prejudices—he had to break down no embarrassments, for he knew that he had left those who were behind him with an enthusiasm equal to his own, and he knew that he would be received by them, when he should return, with the same display of enthusiasm. Our illustsious friend, however, has made a more severe experiment: he has ventured to accomplish that which perhaps none other, connected as he is, with the highest honours of the Brahmanical race, ever attempted: he has ventured to do that which would have been regarded with incredulity ten years ago, and which hereafter will crown his name with the highest honour. He will go back to his friends in the East and tell them how interested we are in them, and how delighted we are to communicate to them through him all our desires to do everything in our power to advance their improvement and felicity. Time would fail me if I were to attempt to go over the history of our illustrious guest, if I were to tell how eminently and constantly he has exerted himself for the removal of misery, and the promotion of happiness. If at this moment Hindoo piles are not burning for the reception of widows it is owing to his interference, to his exhortations, to his arguments. Can we look on such benefits as those without considering him our brother? Can he come here without hearing our enthusiastic voices telling him how we have marked his progress, and without our professing to him, if not our note of triumph, at least our accents of gratitude? It was to us a delightful dream that we might on some occasion, welcome him here; but though it was a hope, it was

A note to his booksellers, of May 1, 1832, shows that he was a regular subscriber to the *Monthly Repository*, the Unitarian organ. He frequently attended Unitarian places of worship. But Unitarians found, to their considerable surprise that he was by no means prepared to identify himself wholly with their cause. His first Sunday in England was typical. He divided his attendance between Unitarian and Anglican churches. In fact the balance seemed latterly to turn in

but a trembling one of which we scarcely dared to anticipate the fruition. But its accomplishment has produced recollections so interesting, that this day will be an epoch in our history, and no one will forget the occasion when the Brahmin stood among us to receive our welcome, and the assurance of the interest we take in all he does and in all he shall do ; to which I may add that our delight will be too great if we can in any way advance those great plans, the progress of which is the grand object of his exertions. Sir, I move with great pleasure, "that the members of this Association feel a deep interest in the amelioration of the condition of the natives of British India; that we trust their welfare and improvement will never be lost sight of by the Legislature and Government of our country ; that we have especial pleasure in the hope that juster notions and purer forms of religion are gradually advancing amongst them; and that our illustrious visitor from that distant region, the Rajah Rammohun Roy, be hereby certified of our sympathy in his arduous and philanthropic labours, of our admiration for his character, of our delight in his presence amongst us, and of our conviction that the magnanimous and beneficent course which he has marked out for himself and hitherto consistently pursued, will entitle him to the blessings of his country-men and of mankind, as it will assuredly receive those of future generations.

Dr. Kirkland (late President of Harvard University, United States)—In the absence of the Hon. Henry Wheaton, who was to have seconded this motion but is prevented by indisposition, I have great pleasure in seconding the motion. It is well known that the Rajah is an object of lively interest in America; and he is expected there with the greatest anxiety.

The Rev. Chairman,—In proposing this resolution I beg to suggest that the assembly should rise in unanimous approbation of its object.

favour of the Anglican. It was no Unitarian divine, but the Rev. Dr. Kenney, the "Established" incumbent of St. Olaves Southwark, whom Rammohun Roy came to style "his parish priest." The ground assigned for this choice is the Hindu's admiration for Dr. Kenney's "benignity, charity, liberality to the creeds of others, and honesty in the great political

The meeting accordingly rose and carried the resolution by acclamation.

Rammohun Roy.—I am too unwell and too much exhausted to take any active part in this meeting; but I am much indebted to Dr. Kirkland and to Dr. Bowring for the honour they have done me by calling me their fellow-labourer, and to you for admitting me to this society as a brother, and one of your fellow-labourers. I am not sensible that I have done anything to deserve being called a promoter of this cause; but with respect to your faith I may observe, that I too believe in the one God, and that I believe in almost all the doctrines that you do: but I do this for my own salvation and for my own peace. For the objects of your Society I must confess that I have done very little to entitle me to your gratitude or such admiration of my conduct. What have I done? I do not know what I have done! If I have ever rendered you any services, they must be very trifling—very trifling I am sure. I laboured under many disadvantages. In the first instance, the Hindoos and the Brahmins, to whom I am related, are all hostile to the cause; and even many Christians there are more hostile to our common cause than the Hindoos and Brahmins. I have honour for the appelation of Christian; but they always tried to throw difficulties and obstacles in the way of the principles of Unitarian Christianity. I have found some of these here; but more there. They abhor the notion of simple precepts. They always lay a stress on mystery and mystical points, which serve to delude their followers; and the consequence is, that we met with such opposition in India that our progress is very slight; and I feel ashamed on my side that I have not made any progress that might have placed me on a footing with my fellow-labourers in this part of the globe. However if this is the true system of Christianity, it will prevail notwithstanding all the opposition that may be made to it. Scripture seconds your system of religion, common sense is always on your side; while power and prejudice are on the side of your opponents. There is a

struggle for Reform." There is a dash of humour about the fact of the author of 'Reasons for frequenting a Unitarian place of worship instead of the numerously attended established Churches' coming round in the end to style an Established clergyman his "parish priest." But of this more anon.

Rammohun's political sagacity in supposing that his influence would tell more decisively for India through his personal if unofficial presence in London than through the usual official channels connecting the subject race with the supreme government was abundantly confirmed by the event. Whatever flaw official etiquette might find in the validity of his credentials was more than covered by the acceptance which the ultimate authority accorded to his mission. It is said* that Ministers of the Crown "recognised his embassy and his title" as the ennobled representative of the Emperor of Delhi. But the much more important fact was that the people of England, in their own spontaneous way, acknowledged him as Ambassador from the people of India. And this fact, however trying to official nerves, could not be ignored. The East India Company did indeed adhere stiffly to its refusal to recognise him either as Envoy from Delhi or as Rajah. But it could no longer afford to treat him as cavalierly as it had treated him in Calcutta. Mr. Sutherland

battle going on between reason, scripture, common sense, and wealth, power and prejudice. The three have been struggling with three; but I am convinced that your success, sooner or later, is certain. I feel overexhausted, and therefore conclude with an expression of my heartfelt thanks for the honour that from time to time you have conferred on me, and which I shall never forget to the last moment of my existence.

The Chairman.—The Rajah will now allow me, as the representative of this assembly, to take him once more by the hand, and to repeat in your name our deep and heartfelt thanks for his presence on this occasion."—Edi.]

* By the *Asiatic Journal*, November, 1833.

remarks somewhat sardonically on the striking alteration in their demeanour to Rammohun Roy which his reception in England effected among the Anglo-Indian officials. The very same men who had treated him with scorn in India now eagerly courted his acquaintance. The change of attitude was conspicuously signalized on the 6th of July, 1831, when a dinner was given to the distinguished stranger by the East India Company. "It was what was called a family dinner in contradistinction to the grand feast given upon the eve of the departure of a Governor for India."* It was nevertheless quite a State affair. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Company presided, and some four-score guests were present. In proposing the toast of the evening the Chairman chiefly indulged in personal eulogy, but added the hope that Rammohun's reception would encourage other 'able and influential' Hindus to visit England. Rammohun in reply was equally discreet. 'That day was one,' he said, 'to which he had looked forward with the greatest degree of expectation. It rejoiced him to be seated amongst a body of gentlemen who had with such humanity and kindness carried on the government of India.' He contrasted the sanguinary anarchy which had prevailed in India prior to the advent of the British with its present peace and progress. 'He felt most grateful to the various illustrious persons who had filled from time to time the office of Governor-General,—to Lords Cornwallis, Wellesley, and Hastings' (he is careful not to mention Lord Amherst),—ay, and to Lord William Bentinck, who 'had done all in his power to gain the good opinion of the natives of India and so raise them in the scale of nations. He felt proud and grateful at what India was experiencing,' and hoped she would ever enjoy a government equally popular, kind, conciliatory, and humane.

* *Asiatic Journal,* August, 1831, from whose report of the dinner at the City of London Tavern the particulars next mentioned are taken.

The chronicler observes thal "it was rather curious to see the Brahman surrounded by hearty feeders upon turtle and venison and champagne, and touching nothing himself but rice and cold water."

This public honour would certainly not lessen the influence which Rammohun possessed as an authority on all Indian questions. It was only natural that the Select Committee of the House of Commons which was appointed in February and re-appointed in June to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter should invite him to appear before it. This request Rammohun declined, but tendered his evidence in the form of successive "Communications* to the Board of Control," which besides duly appearing in the Blue Books were published by him in a separate volume.† The first of these was dated August 19, 1831, and dealt with the Revenue. It consists of two parts, one setting forth the facts and remedies proposed in question and answer, the other a summary paper of proposals. Rammohun here appears as the champion of the rack-rented ryot, or cultivator. While the Zemindars or landholders had been greatly benefited by the Perpetual Settlement of 1793, while their wealth and the wealth of the community generally had increased, the poor cultivator was no better off. "Such is the melancholy

* [With reference to these Dr. Carpenter wrote : "His communictions to our Legislature show with what closeness of observation, soundness of judgment, and comprehensiveness of views, he had considered the various circumstances which interfered with its improvement, or which, on the other hand, tended to promote it. They show him to be at once the philosopher and the patriot. They are full of practical wisdom ; and there is reason to believe that they were highly valued by the Government,and that they aided in the formation of the new system, by which the well-being of our vast dependencies in India must be so greatly affected for good or for ill." Edi.]

† *Exposition of the practical operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India, etc.*—Smith, Elder & Co. 1832.

condition of the agricultural labourers," he wrote, "that it always gives me the greatest pain to allude to it." The remedy he asked for was in the first place the prohibition of any further rise in rent, and secondly—rents being now so exorbitantly high as to leave the ryot in a state of extreme misery,—a reduction in the revenue demanded from the zemindar so as to ensure a reduction in the ryot's rent. The decrease in revenue he would meet by increasing taxes upon luxuries, or by employing as collectors low-salaried natives instead of high-salaried Europeans. He also approved of the settlement in India of a few model landlords from England, but was careful to stipulate that they should not be drawn from the lower classes. He concluded with an earnest appeal "to any and every authority to devise some mode of alleviating the present miseries of the agricultural peasantry of India."

In an appendix he urged the Imperial utility of this policy. To recognise the indefeasible rights of the ryot in the soil would make him loyal to the power that secured them. "The saving that might be effected by this liberal and generous policy, through the substituting of a militia force for a great part of the present standing army, would be much greater than any gain that could be realized by any system of increasing land revenue." This argument was backed up by a quotation from Saadi, which puts Rammohun's ideal for British rule in India in a nutshell :—

> Be on friendly terms with thy subjects,
> And rest easy about the warfare of thine enemies ;
> For to an upright prince his people is an army.

Throughout this communication the spokesman of the New India showed himself once more to be no mere advocate of the moneyed and educated classes, but the real tribune of the toiling and oppressed poor.

In his *Questions and Answers on the Judicial System of*

India, which was dated September 19, 1831, he proposed many and extensive reforms. Among the principal measures he advocated were the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the courts of law; the appointment of native assessors in the civil courts; trial by jury, of which the Punchayet system was the native parallel; separation of the offices of judge and revenue commissioner; separation of the offices of judge and magistrate; codification of the criminal law and also of the civil law of India; and consultation with the local magnates before enacting laws.

His *Additional Queries respecting the condition of India*, dated September 28, 1831, contained much valuable information. He recommended at the outset that "if the people of India were to be induced to abandon their religious prejudices and thereby become accustomed to the frequent and common use of a moderate proportion of animal food, the physical qualities of the people might be very much improved." The moral condition of the people he found to be good at a distance from large towns and head-stations and courts of law; bad among townsfolk; and still worse among clerks of courts, zemindars' agents, and the like. The people generally possessed "the same capability of improvement as any other civilized people." Those about the courts of princes rather carried their politeness to an inconvenient extent. He declared the ancient families to be "decidedly disaffected" to British rule, and urged that the only policy which could ensure the attachment of the intelligent natives was to make them eligible for gradual promotion, by merit and ability, to situations of trust and respectability in the State.

In this same month of September, Rammohun Roy was presented to the King* and added to his other distinctions

* [He was presented to His Majesty by the President of the Board of Control, and had a place assigned to him at the Coronation among the ambassadors. Edi.]

that of being the first Brahman received at the British court. The incident is one that lends itself to the art of a great historical painter. The ceremony was the picturesque token of a significant moment in the evolution of empire.

Rammohun was now a fully fledged member of the highest circles of society. Perhaps it was at this time that he was induced to depart from the "perfectly unostentatious" style of living which was to him habitual. "For a short time, about three months," according to Sutherland, "he had yieled to advice that was anything but disinterested, and taken up his residence in a most magnificent abode in Cumberland Terrace, Regent's Park, where he lived extravagantly.* Under the advice that was not disinterested Mr. Sutherland is evidently referring to a man of whom we have heard before and who comes into unpleasant prominence in connection with the closing scenes of Rammohun's career. Mr. Sandford Arnot was acting as assistant editor to Mr, Buckingham on the staff of the *Calcutta Journal* in 1823, when that newspaper roused the wrath of Acting Governor-General Adams, and when consequently he had to follow his chief into banishment from India. On Rammohun's arrival in England, Mr. Sandford Arnot, doubtless on the strength of old acquaintance, was engaged as his secretary, and seems to have generally accompanied him†.

* *The Indian Gazette*, February 18, 1834. We have letters of Rammohun, Roy, dated 125, Regent Street, up to June 13, 1831, and letters of his dated from 48, Bedford Square, from January 27, 1832; so that this interval of extravagant residence must have fallen between those dates. Arnot says that most of Rammohun Roy's papers on the Judicial and Revenue System were written in Regent Street; which points to the removal to Cumberland Terrace taking place in or about September.

† "As I may be accompanied by a European friend and two servants, I will lodge at some hotel in your immediate neighbourhood." R. Roy to J. B. Estlin, in a letter dated May 10, 1831.

Unless this quondam journalist has been shamefully traduced, he was a low, cunning parasite. Having fastened on a rich and generous patron, whose position in a strange land made him peculiarly dependent on the guidance of British friends, he turned the opportunity without scruple to his own sordid account. In this as in other instances Rammohun showed himself—probably through excess of good nature—lacking in a wise choice of friends.

Not that he was by any means a slave to the caprice of those he had chosen; as was shown in this very matter of residence. Sutherland tells us that "his good sense soon prevailed over this folly" of an extravagant establisment.

> He abandoned this splendid mansion and went to live with Mr. Hare, the brother of Mr. David Hare* of Calcutta, in Bedford Square, where he continued while he was in London. He kept a plain chariot, with a coachman and footman in neat liveries; in fact adopted and adhered to the style of a private gentleman of moderate fortune, though still courted by the first men in the kingdom.

Of the stately figure which so much impressed London society, it may be well to reproduce here two portraits drawn by different hands. The first is by his friend Mr. Sutherland, writing in the *Indian Gazette*, Feb. 18, 1834. He says:—

> Rammohun Roy surpassed the generality of his countrymen in his personal appearance almost as much as in his mental powers. In his prime of manhood his figure was beyond the common height, and was stout and muscular in proportion. His countenance wore an expression of blended dignity and benevolence that charmed at first sight and put his visitors at their ease, while it checked an irreverent familiarity. In the latter part of his life, which closed in his sixtieth year, his manly figure began to droop, perhaps not so much from age as the weight of thought and the toil of study. But his fine dark eye, though it lost something of its fire, retained its intelligence and amenity to the last.

* The old comrade of Rammohun in Calcutta, in the struggle for the higher education of the natives.

The other sketch is by "R. M. M.," and appeared in the *Court Journal* for Oct. 5, 1833 :—

The Rajah, in the outer man, was cast in nature's finest mould : his figure was manly and robust : his carriage dignified : the forehead towering, expansive and commanding : the eye dark, restless, full of brightness and animation, yet liquid and benevolent, and frequently glistening with a tear when affected by the deeper sensibility of the heart ; the nose of Roman form and proportions : lips full and indicative of independence; the whole features deeply expressive, with a smile of soft and pecular fascination which won irresistibly the suffrages to whom it was addressed. His manners were characterized by suavity blended with dignity, verging towards either point according to the company in which he might be placed. To ladies his politeness was marked by the most delicate manner, and his felicitous mode of paying them a compliment gained him very many admirers among the high-born beauties of Britain. In conversation with individuals of every rank and of various nations and professions, he passed with the utmost ease from one language to another, suiting his remarks to each and all in excellent taste, and commanding the astonishment and respect of his hearers.

It was in argument, however, that this exalted Brahmin was most conspicuous : he seemed to grapple with truth intuitively, and called in invective, raillery, sarcasm, and sometimes a most brilliant wit, to aid him in confuting his opponent ; if precedent were necessary, a remarkably retentive memory and extensive reading in many languages supplied him with a copious fund ; and at times with a rough, unsparing, ruthless hand he burst asunder the meshes of sophistry, error and bigotry, in which it might be attempted to entangle him.

Of Rammohun's social life in London, as of his entire European visit, very much is told in Miss Mary Carpenter's *Last Days in England of the Rajah*,* which need not be repeated here.† We catch glimpses of him at sundry sorts of society functions, always the centre of admiring attention, always, too, the thorough Oriental gentleman, versatile,

* Trubner & Co., 1869. While we have gladly availed ourselves of this work, our principal sources for the present chapter are found elsewhere, as the attentive reader will discern.

† [In the present edition a good deal of the matter from Miss Carpenter's book has been embodied—Edi.]

emotional, yet dignified.* His gracious manners and his especial deference to women† greatly ingratiated him with the fair sex, several of whom have left on record warmly appreciative reminiscences. Mrs. Le Breton ‡ who was a near neighbour of the Hares, tells of her aunt frankly confessing that "his feelings for women, still more his admiration of the mental accomplishments of English ladies, won our hearts." Mrs. Le Breton goes on—

I often met him in London . . at large parties and even balls, where he would converse on subjects that seemed rather unsuitable to the place,—the Trinity and other sacred things which were occupying his own thoughts.

The same lady has preserved an instructive incident which explains better than volumes of analysis the fatuous failure of the baser sort of Anglo-Indian :—

At a party at a friend of ours—Captain Mauleverer, who had known the Rajah in India and was very much attached to him,—we . . overheard one of the guests, an Indian officer of rank, say angrily "What is that *black fellow* doing here ?" A shocking speech to those who loved and honoured him so much !

* [Miss Carpenter writes (Last Days of Rammohun Roy, p. 93) : "How much the Hindu Reformer attracted the attention of society, and won the respect of the intellectual portion of it, is shown by the following extracts from Miss Lucy Aikin's letters to Dr. Channing (Memoirs, Miscellanies and Letters of the late Lucy Aikin, London, Longman). The first from a letter to Dr. Channing dated Hampstead, June 28, 1831 :—

'In the intervals of politics we talk of the Christian Brahmin, Rammohun Roy. All accounts agree in representing him as a person of extraordinary merit. With very great intelligence and ability, he unites a modesty and simplicity which win all hearts."—Edi].

† [In this connection the testimony of Mrs. Davison, to one of whose children the Raja was God-father, deserves reproduction. Mr. Davison wrote : "For surely never was there a man of so much modesty and humility ! I used to feel quite ashamed of the reverential manner in which he behaved to me. Had I been our Queen, I could not have been approached and taken leave of with more respect." Edi.]

‡ In her *Memories of Seventy Years*.

Such is the folly which pride works in the less worthy members of a conquering race. Rammohun might be—and was—scholar and statesman, philanthropist and religious reformer, the friend and superior of many a Governor and Minister; yet to this military bully he was only 'that black fellow'; and therefore to be chevied out of genteel society.

We nevertheless find Rammohun thoroughly at home among the young Tory bloods, not hesitating to rate them soundly as "vagabonds" and worse for impeding the progress of Reform.

Fanny Kemble was one of the celebrities who have left on record appreciative reminiscences of their meeting with the Rajah. She was introduced to him at the house of Mr. Basil Montagu, a mutual friend. He was delighted to find her already acquainted with the Hindu drama, but was surprised to learn that she did not know *Sakuntala*, which he regarded as the most remarkable play which India had produced, and which Goethe called "the most wonderful production of human genius." The Rajah subsequently sent her a copy of Sir William Jones' translation, but she failed to find in it the beauty and sublimity he attributed to it. Rammohun was evidently profoundly susceptible to dramatic impressions, as may be seen from an entry in Mrs. Kemble's diary for December 22, 1831:—

> In the evening the play was "Isabella"; the house very bad. I played very well. The Rajah Rammohun Roy was in the Duke of Devonshire's box, and went into fits of crying, poor man!

This is a fact in a many-sided character which we are glad to have preserved. It is pleasant to know that the great reformer was not above tears, even over a well-acted play. We owe another instructive glimpse of the man to the same keen and kindly eye. The young actress records her presence at 'a pleasant party' at the Montagus' on March 6, 1832, where for an hour she 'recovered her love of dancing,' and where she met the Rajah.

We presently began a delightful nonsense conversation, which lasted a considerable time, and amused me extremely. His appearance is very striking. His picturesque dress and colour make him, of course, a remarkable object in a London ballroom. His countenance, besides being very intellectual, has an expression of great sweetness and benignity.

After a threatened break "we resumed our conversation together and kept up a brief interchange of persiflage which made us both laugh very much." Three days later she notes receiving "a charming letter and some Indian books from that most amiable of all the wise men of the East."* One smiles to imagine what the good Baptists at Serampore Mission would think now of their quondam associate and literary combatant. These visits to the playhouse in the society of one of the first peers of the realm, and these gay frivolities with an actress would doubtless only confirm their theological misgivings as to the future fate of the "intelligent heathen." Rammohun had certainly no scruples about theatre going. On June 12, 1833, we find him writing to Miss Kiddell offering to accompany that lady and her friends to Astley's in the evening.

Among other celebrities which Rammohun met about this time was Robert Owen, the father of British Socialism. The religious and the economic reformers were guests of Dr. Arnot, and Owen did his best to convert Rammohun to Socialism. As the Scot finally lost his temper, the Hindu was considered to have had the best of the argument. It is interesting to remember that Mr. John Hare could call himself in a letter to Mr. Estlin (of March 25, 1834) "a poor Owenite."

The broad humanness of the Rajah's character is further shown in a little incident recorded by Miss Carpenter. The infant son of the Rev. D. Dawson was named after him 'Rammohun Roy'. The Rajah was actually present at the baptismal ceremony, and subsequently evinced a lively interest

* Fanny Kemble's *Record of a Girlhood*, vol. i., p. 290, and iii. 144.

in the little fellow, calling frequently to see him. In fact, Mrs. Dawson wrote, "His visits to me were generally paid to me in my nursery, as he insisted on coming up so as to visit his namesake at the same time and not to interrupt me." Whatever the measure of perpetuity vouchsafed to the religious movement begun by Rammohun, this glimpse of the stately and courtly Brahman in the nursery, eager to see the baby and thoughtful of the mother's convenience, will, one may hope, be treasured by his followers to the very last of them as one of the sweetest and most beautiful memories of their Founder. Probably no index of character is so decisive as the attitude assumed to mother and child; and especially of religious leaders does this rule hold. Rammohun Roy in the nursery will be remembered by Brahmo mothers and Brahmo children much more vividly and endearingly than in any of his appearances in Court, or Senate-house, or Church, or even in the group of loving disciples.

Amid these varied social experiences, Rammohun never seems to have forgotten the scrutiny to which his conduct would be subjected by public opinion in India. We find him on January 27, 1832, writing to a friend who had invited him to attend a Unitarian Anniversary dinner, on Feb. 8th, in terms which reveal his constant watchfulness and sensitive regard to Indian criticism. He says:

It is truly mortifying for me to hesitate even for a moment to comply with a request of one whom I so highly esteem and respect. But I have before explained to you how much attending public dinners might be injurious to my interest in India and disagreeable to the feeling of my friends there. When you recollect, my dear Sir, that I attended the anniversary of the Unitarian Association in defiance of the positive advice of my medical attendants, who declared that my joining so large an assembly while I was troubled with inflammation would endanger my life, I feel satisfied that you will not attribute my absence to indifference about your success.

I was induced to attend Dr. Williams' anniversary dinner under an assurance from the Rev. Mr. Aspland that the party would consist of

friends who felt a warm interest on my behalf. But even then I felt all the time disquiet and low spirited. However should there be any divine service before dinner at the meeting or at your Chapel, I shall be very happy to attend at the service and return home. I sincerely feel the absence of our esteemed friend Dr. Bowring.

He finally consented to join the party "after dinner at 9 o'clock......at the London Tavern," so we learn from a note of his of Feb. 7. This dislike of his to public dinners was evidently due to their publicity. We have already observed the readiness with which he accepted invitations to private dinner parties—at one time dining out nine successive days; but these not being reported in the newspapers would not be so likely to reach the ears of his Hindu opponents, who were eagerly seeking occasions to prove against him breach of caste.

But about this time Rammohun's chief pre-occupation was political rather than social or ceremonial. The agitation for Reform was sweeping on to the final crisis. The First Bill introduced by Lord John Russell as Rammohun was nearing England (March 1, 1831), and defeated in Committee in April, had been followed by an immediate Dissolution. The Second Bill was carried through the new House of Commons by Sept. 22, but on Oct. 8 was rejected by the Lords, and the country was brought to the verge of civil war. The Third Reform Bill was carried through all its stages in the Lower House before the end of the following March (1832); and the nation awaited the action of the Lords in a wild fever of excitement. Rammohun shared in the general agony of suspense. He felt that it was no mere British business, but that it vitally affected the fortunes of mankind, and in no place more than in India. In a letter to Miss Kiddell, of date "48, Bedford Square, March 31," he says:—

I had lately the pleasure of seeing the Rev. Dr. Carpenter, and hearing from that truly venerable minister that Miss Castle and yourself were perfectly well and deeply interested in the cause of Reform, on the success of which the welfare of England, nay of the world, depends. I

should have long ere this visited Bristol and done myself the honour of paying you my long promised visit, but I have been impatiently waiting in London to know the result of the Bill. I feel very much obliged by your kind offers of attention to my comforts while I am in that part of the country, of which I hope to be able to avail myself as soon as my mind is relieved on this subject.

It wil! be remembered that on the momentous measure being introduced in the Upper Chamber, the peers showed signs of yielding to the storm of popular agitation. The Second Reading was carried on April 14th by 9 votes. On the 27th Rammohun was sending to a lady friend in the country,—Mrs. Woodford by name,—copies of his *Remarks on India* and a pamphlet on the abolition of Suttee ; and in the accompanying letter he referred to Lord W. Bentinck's Anti-Suttee administration and then to the victory over the peers, as follows :—

You will, I am sure, be highly gratified to learn that the present Governor-General of India has sufficient courage to afford them [Hindu widows] protection against the selfish relations, who cruelly used to take advantage of their tender feelings in the name and under the cloak of religion.

It must have afforded Mr. Woodford and yourself much gratification to learn by the first conveyance the division on the second reading of the Reform Bill. The struggles are not merely between the reformers and anti-reformers, but between liberty and oppression throughout the world ; between justice and injustice, and between right and wrong. But from a reflection on the past events of history, we clearly perceive that liberal principles in politics and religion have been long gradually but steadily gaining ground, notwithstanding the opposition and obstinacy of despots and bigots. I am still unable to determine the period of my departure from London and my visit to you in the country. I may perhaps do myself that pleasure.

After the peers had shown fight for the last time, and had at last (in June) been cowed into finally passing the Bill, which was followed by similar measures for Ireland and

Scotland, the Rajah wrote to Mr. Wm. Rathbone under date of July 31st:—

I am *now* happy to find myself fully justified in congratulating you and my other friends at Liverpool on the *complete* success of the Reform Bills, notwithstanding the voilent opposition and want of political principle on the part of the aristocrats. The nation can no longer be a prey of the few who used to fill their purses at the expense, nay, to the ruin of the people, for a period of upwards of fifty years. The ministers have honestly and firmly discharged their duty and provided the people with means of securing their rights. I hope and pray that the mighty people of England may now in like manner do theirs, cherishing public spirit and liberal principles, at the same time banishing bribery, corruption, and selfish interests from public proceedings.

As I publicly avowed that in the event of the Reform Bill being defeated I would renounce my connection with this country, I refrained from writing to you or any other friend in Liverpool until I knew the result. Thank Heaven, I can now feel proud of being one of your fellow subjects, and heartily rejoice that I have the infinite happiness of witnessing the salvation of the nation, nay, of the whole world.

Pray remember me kindly to Mr. Cropper and Mr. Benson, and present my best respects to Mrs. Rathbone and my love to the children....

P.S.—If the German philosopher is still at Liverpool, be good enough to remember me kindly to him, and inform him that we have succeeded in the Reform question wirhout having recourse to the principles of phrenology.

One is glad to see that the Rajah did not forget the children when he wrote, and that he could not resist the chance of poking fun at the good-humoured Spurzheim. His public threat of renouncing British allegiance in case the peers triumphed might perhaps seem amusing to the lower type of Anglo-Indian mind,—the type that thought of him as only "that black fellow." The spectacle of a solitary Hindu renouncing the British Empire and all its works because of its refusing a wider franchise, not to his Eastern countrymen, but to the people of England, might be so construed as to look positively funny. But Rammohun was conscious of being virtually Ambassador for India; and if the

sympathies of the progressive Hindus whom he typified were estranged from an unreformed England, and given, say, to a more democratic France, the Oriental memories and aspirations of the French might find less difficulty in making trouble for us in India. In any case, it was the most pronounced protest the Hindu reformer could make; and at a time of world-crisis, as he conceived it, he must strike his heaviest stroke. It was stated, indeed, that should the Bill be defeated, he was resolved on leaving England and transferring himself and his allegiance to the United States. But we remember the intense enthusiasm he displayed for the tricolour when he first saw it at the Cape; and a further proof of his French sympathies was supplied by his visit to Paris in the autumn of the year.

While the people of England were thus successfully remodelling their own system of Government, the Select Committee of the House of Commons was busily employed, amid all the storm of semi-revolutionary agitation, in considering how the government of the people of India might be in its turn—though on a widely different plane,—advantageously remodelled. Rammohun, alive to the finger-tips with the significance of both phases of imperial reconstruction, was naturally most concerned with what directly affected his own countrymen. We have from his hand under date July 14th, 1832, a highly suggestive document which appeared in the General Appendix to the Report of this Select Committee, and was so submitted to Parliament.

It consists of *Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans*.*

* [In the the midst of his absorbing political labours and social engagements the Raja, while in England, made time to publish several books, some of them new editions of old writings. The *Christian Register* for February 1832, announced the following publications from the pen of Rajah Rammohun Roy. "An essay on the Rights of Hindus over ancestral property according to the Law of Bengal, with an append

It is a paper of rare personal and national importance. It supports the plea, which he had previously put forward both in speech and writing, for the removal of the restrictions imposed by the old Charter on the lease or purchase of lands by Europeans. He now enumerates nine advantages which he expects from the freedom asked for. European settlers would improve the agriculture and industry of the country, would help to dispel native superstitions and prejudices, would more readily secure improvements from Government, would be a check on oppression, native or British, would diffuse education through the land, would acquaint the public at home with what was going on in India as it appeared to other than official eyes, and would be an additional strength to the Government in case of invasion. The two remaining "advantages" must be quoted in full because of their daring forecast of remote possibilities :—

> The same cause would operate to continue the connection between Great Britain and India on a solid and permanent footing ; provided only that the latter country be governed in a liberal manner, by means of Parliamentary superintendence and such other legislative checks in this country as may be devised and established. India may thus for an unlimited period enjoy union with England, and the advantage of her enlightened Government; and in return contribute to support the greatness of this country.

containing Letters on the Hindoo Law of Inheritance" and "Remarks on East India Affairs; comprising the evidence to the Committee of the House of Commons on the Judicial and Revenue systems of India, with a dissertation on its Ancient Boundaries; also suggestions for the future Government of the Country illustrated by a Map and farther enriched with Notes." A volume of his theological writings was published in 1832 by Allen and Co under the title "Translation of several principal books, passages and texts of the Veds, and of some controversial works on Brahminical Theology." The Raja intended to publish the journal of his visit to Europe, which would certainly have been very interesting, but evidently the work did not make much progress.—Edi]

If, however, events should occur to effect a seperation between the two countries, then still the existence of a large body of respectable settlers (consisting of Europeans and their descendants, professing Christianity, and speaking the English language in common with the bulk of the people, as well as possessed of superior knowledge, scientific, mechanical and political) would bring that vast Empire in the East to a level with other large Christian countries in Europe, and by means of its immense riches and extensive population, and by the help which may be reasonably expected from Europe, they (the settlers and their descendants) may succeed sooner or later in enlightening the surrounding nations of Asia.

Certain disadvantages are then specified, with their remedies. The insolence, over-reaching, and discredit to the British name, which were feared, might be obviated by allowing to settle, for the first twenty years at least, only "educated persons of character and capital," by equal laws, and by the appointment of European pleaders in country courts. Then follows a strange look ahead :—

Some apprehend as the fourth possible danger, that if the population of India were raised to wealth, intelligence, and public spirit by the accession and by the example of numerous respectable European settlers, the mixed community so formed would revolt (as the United States of America formerly did) against the power of Great Britain, and would ultimately establish independence. In reference to this, however, it must be observed that the Americans were driven to rebellion by misgovernment, otherwise they would not have revolted and separated themselves from England. Canada is a standing proof that an anxiety to effect a separation from the Mother Conntry is not the natural wish of a people, even tolerably well ruled. The mixed community of India in like manner, so long as they are treated liberally and governed in an enlightened manner, will feel no disposition to cut off its connection with England, which may be preserved with so much mutual benefit to both countries. Yet as before observed, if events should occur to effect a separation (which may arise from many accidental causes. about which it is vain to speculate or make predictions), still a friendly and highly advantageous commercial intercourse may be kept up between two free and Christian countries, united as they will then be by resemblance of language, religion, and manners,

The fifth obstacle mentioned is the prejudicial effect of the climate on the health of Europeans. This, it is suggested, might be obviated to some extent by selecting the more salubrious spots for settlement. The paper concludes with a a plea for at least a trial of the experiment.

The prospects unfolded here in close and rapid succession are almost enough to take one's breath away. The means by which the anticipated results should be attained is a matter of minor importance. The hope of an extensive and permanent settlement of Europeans on Indian soil may have proved in the present stage of civilization utterly fallacious. The remarkable thing is the vision of the eventual condition of his country, however arrived at, as it disclosed itself to the mind of Rammohun Roy. He shows here with ample clearness the kind of India he desired, and to some extent at least expected to arise. It is *an English-speaking India.* He anticipates that the settlers and their descendants will "speak the English language in common with the bulk of the people." It is, moreover,—and this is a matter of yet greater surprise— *a Christian India.* He looks to it being raised to a level with "other large Christian empires," and speaks of England and India as prospectively "two free and Christian countries..united..by resemblance of religion." It is, in a word, *generally Anglicized India*, possessing the opulence, intelligence and public spirit, and also the language, religion and manners of the English race. Nor is the Rajah in the slightest degree indisposed to contemplate the prospect of India as *a nation politically independent.* In any case he evidently desires to accept as her destiny the sublime *rôle* of the *Enlightener of Asia.*

These five points constitute a singularly daring programme. Never has the spokesman of the New India been so outspoken before. Never has he drawn so liberally on the future. Yet most of the points are in the right line of his

previous development. He had been throughout a consistent advocate for Europeanizing the Hindu intellect and the Hindu civilization. His sympathy with the struggle for national independence all over the world takes from his anticipation of a free and independent India any element of surprise. His hope that India would become a light to lighten the nations of the East was a natural product of his patriotism and love of rational culture. The one puzzling thing in this forecast is the prospect of a Christianized India. The cynic may be ready with the jibe that this part of the programme was srtictly for British comsumption. The Evangelical and Nonconformist public were shortly to show their strength by carrying through Parliament the abolition of West Indian Slavery ; and the lure of a converted East Indies might be supposed to secure their powerful support for Rammohun's less distant projects. This explanation, quite apart from its slur on the Rajah's character, scarcely fits the case. The reform Rammohun is asking for is by no means of the dimensions to justify so tremendous a concession ; and even if such a concession were intended, it would hardly be veiled in those indirect and allusive sentences. No one can suppose that the rest of the forecast is disingenuous. Indian independence was not exactly a prospect most agreeable to British susceptibilities ; yet it is calmly advanced as a future possibility. The other points are quite of a piece with all we have known of Rammohun Roy. The imputation of insincerity in this one point of religion is surely gratuitous. The whole forecast bears the appearance of being genuine and in good faith. But we must in fairness point out that to anticipate as possible the conversion of India to Christianity is not necessarily to regard that as the most desirable result, or to accept Christianity as one's own religion. In the struggle which must ensue between Hinduism and the Christian faith Rammohun

may have foreseen that the latter would conquer as being the more fit, without himself believing it to be the most fit. It was certainly nearer his pure Theism than the agglomerate of beliefs which went under the Hindu name; and its triumph would certainly be more acceptable to him than its defeat. But he still may have looked beyond the victory of Christiantty and hoped for the subsequent ascendency of his own Theistic faith. Nevertheless, however we may explain his forecast, the fact remains that the Founder of the Brahmo Somaj did anticipate the eventual Christianization of India. This is a fact the significance of which ought to be at no time overlooked either by Brahmos or by Christians.

Its importance is vastly increased when we remember that this is the last publication of Rammohun Roy. His career as author closes here; and closes with this truly colossal outlook. The document may not unfitly be held to embody the Last Will and Testament of Rammohun Roy to the People of India. His final literary deliverance holds up to them the fivefold prospect of

India speaking English,
India Christian,
India socially Anglicized,
India possibly independent,
India the Enlightener of Asia.

Among all the permutations and combinations of the Eastern and the English-speaking worlds, may these large hopes of the first Brahman who visited the English capital be reverently remembered!

Within a few months of penning this high tribute to the worth of English civilization, we find Rammohun Roy resident in the metropolis of our traditional rival in the East. Of his stay in Paris we have very scanty informa-

tion. * Between the letter cited above and dated Bedford Square, July 31st, and a letter of Miss Aikin written in October (1832), in which she speaks of Rammohun Roy being then in Paris, we have no account of his movements. We do not know when he went or when he returned. In an *Appendice* to M. Garcin de Tassy's *Rudiments de la Langue Hindustani*, published in 1883, there are twenty-one original Hindustani letters from various authors, one of whom is Rammohun Roy. Whether this was a fruit of his Parisian visit we have no knowledge. The next that we do know of him is given in a letter of his written after his return to England, and dated January 31st, 1833. It is addressed to Mr. Woodford and reads in full :—

My dear Sir,—I had on the 27th the pleasure of receiving your obliging communication, and beg to offer you and Mrs. W. my best thanks for this mark of attention towards me. I rejoice to observe that the translation of the Veds, &c., which I presented to Mrs. W. before my departure for the Continent of Europe, has proved interesting to her and yourself. I am now confirmed in the opinion that her good sense and her *rational* devotion to religion will not induce her to reject any reasonable sentiments on the ground that they are not found in this book, or in that volume.

I was detained in France too late to proceed to Italy last year ; besides, without a knowledge of French, I found myself totally unable to carry on communication with foreigners, with any degree of facility. Hence I thought I would not avail myself of my travels through Italy and Austria to my own satisfaction. I have been studying French with a French gentleman, who accompanied me to London, and is now living with me.

I shall be most happy to receive your nephew, Mr. Kinglake, as I doubt not his company and conversation, as your relative and a firm friend of Liberal principles, will be a source of delight to me. I thank you for the mention you made of Sir Henry Strachey. His talents,

* [Miss Carpenter says that in his trip to Paris Rammohun Roy was accompanied by one of the brothers of David Hare and was more than once at the table of Louis Philippe...Edi]

acquirements and manners, have rendered his name valuable to those who know him and can appreciate his merits. To the best of my belief and recollection, I declare that I do not know a native of Persia or India who could repeat Persian with greater accuracy than this British-born gentleman.

RAMMOHUN ROY.

It appears that he broke his return journey at Dover, for in a letter from 48, Bedford Square, of February 7, 1833, he writes to Miss Kiddell, of Bristol :—

I intended to pay you both [your and Miss Castle] a visit while residing in Dover, but was informed that it was necessary to pass London on my way to Bristol. My health is, thank God, thoroughly re-established.

He adds that he hopes to visit Bristol within a month's time, and begs them to "present my best respect to Dr. Carpenter, who truly stands very high in my estimation."

The public ends which brought Rammohun to England were being one by one attained. For two years after his arrival he had been prosecuting his mission from the King of Delhi, and bringing the claims of his royal master before influential personages. Mr. Arnot, in the *Asiatic Journal* for 1833, p. 208, thus states the result :—

A short time before his death he had brought his negotiations with the British Government on behalf of the King of Delhi to a successful close, by a compromise with the Ministers of the Crown, which will add £30,000 a year to the stipend of the Mogul, and of course make a proportionate reduction in the Indian revenue. The deceased ambassador had a contingent interest in this large addition to the ample allowance of the Mogul pageant, and his heirs, it is said, will gain from it a perpetual income of £3,000 or £4,000 a year.

A denial of this version of the facts appeared, evidently from an official source, in the *Journal* for January, 1834. The writer, "A.B.," did, however, allow that "Rammohun Roy delivered into the Court" of Directors "and partially circulated a statement regarding the claims of the King"; and that he

"also framed a letter in English and Persian from the King of Delhi to his late Majesty George the Fourth, corresponding in substance with the former"; but "no answer was returned to either of these representations, and no negotiation on the subject of them carried on with Rammohun Roy." The Court of Directors had indeed granted an augmentation of the King of Delhi's income, but solely on the representation of the Governor-General in Council, and would have made the addition although Rammohun Roy had never set foot in England. The writer concludes by regretting that any portion of the Directors' bounty to their royal beneficiary should have been diverted to Rammohun or his heirs. From these admissions the non-official reader will probably conclude that Rammohun's mission, however ignored officially, had really succeeded. An impecunious monarch, is not likely to bestow a pension of three to four thousand pounds a year except in return for solid service rendered.*

During this his last summer Rammohun had the satisfaction of witnessing the final blow administered to the cause of Suttee. The Appeal against the abolition of that inhuman rite was brought before the imperial authorities at home and was by them decisively rejected. Rammohun was present when the decision was announced on July 11, 1833.

Meantime the deliberations connected with the renewal of the East India Company's Charter were proceeding towards legislation. The Report of the Special Committee had been completed and presented to Parliament in August, 1832. It was before the Court of Directors in the months of March and April, 1833, and its recommendations agreed to. It was then drafted as a Bill and presented in the House of Commons in

* In spite of these official admissions, Mr. Ananda Mohun Bose questions the truth of Arnot's statement that the Rajah and his heirs obtained the "perpetual income" named.

June. During these momentous negotiations Rammohun was doubtless very busy. In a letter to Miss Kiddell, of date May 14th, 1833, he again speaks of his intention to visit Bristol.

But (he adds) important matters passing here daily have detained me and may perhaps detain me longer than I expect. I however lose no time in informing you that the influenza has already lost its influence in London, a circumstance which justifies my entertaining a hope of seeing you and your friends in the metropolis within a short time, * perhaps by the 25th instant.

P.S.—I sincerely hope that you all have escaped the complaint.

So the influenza and the puns its name suggests were a malady common in the year of the first Reformed Parliament.

On June 22 he writes to Miss Castle, who with Miss Kiddell had charge of the education of his adopted son,

I hope you will excuse my boldness when I take upon myself to remind you of your promise to read the publication of a certain learned Brahmin which I have brought to your notice.

As we have seen, Rammohun was always eager to introduce Hindu books to the knowledge of English people, and this desire was naturally greater in regard to his son's teachers. About the same time, he wrote Miss Kiddell, begging her acceptance of a volume containing a series of sermons preached by Dr. Channing, which, he added, "I prize very highly." The following letter to Miss Kiddell gives another glimpse of the Rajah's varied character:

48, Bedford Square,
July 9th, 1833.

Dear Madam,—I had yesterday the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 6th, and rejoice to learn that you find my son peaceable and well-behaved. I however entreat you will not stand on ceremony with him.

* A hope certainly fulfilled by June 12th, when, as we have seen, the Rajah wrote arranging to accompany Miss Kiddell to Astley's theatre.

Be pleased to correct him whenever he deserves correction. My observation on, and confidence in, your excellent mode of educating young persons, have fully encouraged me to leave my youngster under your sole guidance. I at the same time cannot help feeling uneasy now and then at the chance of his proving disrespectful or troublesome to you or to Miss Castle.

Miss Daniel is not going to Bristol to-day. She will probably leave us on Friday next, when I intend to send a parcel of books, &c., in her charge. I hope I shall be able to have the peasure of visiting you at your country residence next week, and not before, a circumstance which I fear will prevent us from joining the meeting in your neighbourhood. Dr. Carpenter (I think) left London on Saturday last. I doubt not you wlll take my youngster every Sunday to hear that pious and true minister of the Gospel.

I will write again by Friday next. In the meantime I remain, dear Madam,

Yours very sincerely,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

Private convenience was, however, still further interfered with by the slow progress of public business, as is shown by this letter to Miss Ann Kiddell :—

48, Bedford Square,
July 19th, 1833.

Dear Madam,—I know not how to express the eager desire I feel to proceed to Bristol to experience your further marks of attention and kindness, and Mis Castle's civil reception and polite conversation. But the sense of my duty to the natives of India has hitherto prevented me from fixing a day for my journey to that town, and has thus overpowered my feeling and inclination. It is generally believed that the main points respecting India will be settled by Wednesday next, and I therefore entertain a strong hope of visiting you by Friday next. I shall not fail to write to you on Wednesday or perhaps on Tuesday next. I feel gratified at the idea that you find my youngster worthy of your company. Nevertheless I entreat you will exercise your authority over him, that he may benefit himself by your instructions. If you find him refractory, pray send him back to London. If not, you may allow him to stay there

till I supply his place. With my best wishes for your uninterrupted health and happiness,

I remain, dear Madam,
Yours very sincerely,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

P.S.—All the active members of the East India Company having been incessantly occupied by the Charter question, I have not yet brought the subject relative to your young nephew to the notice of any of them.

R. R.

The following letter to Miss Castle is on the same sheet :—

Friday, dispatched on Saturday.

Ma chere Demoiselle,—Many thanks for your obliging and polite communication, which by mistake, bears no date. I am glad to observe that you are pleased with your late journey, and with your visit to Windsor. The account which Miss Kiddell and yourself have given of my son, gratifies me very much. Miss Hare received a letter from him this morning which she read to me, expressing his utmost joy and satisfaction with his present situation. I beg you will accept my best thanks for your kind treatment of him. Instead of thanking me for the little tract I had the pleasure to send you last week, I wish you had said only that you would pay attention to it.

You will perceive from my letter to Miss Kiddell that I am to be detained here a week longer at the sacrifice of my feelings. I however cannot help reflecting that to entertain a hope of enjoying the society of friends though for a short time, say one month, is more pleasant than bringing it to a termination by the completion of it. Adieu for the present.

I remain,
Yours very sincerely and obliged,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

Impatience of protracted parliamentary delay appears again in the following to Miss Ann Kiddell ;—

48, Beford Square,
July 24th, 1833.

Dear Madam,—From my anxiety to proceed to Bristol, heavy duties appeared to me light, and difficult tasks had seemed easily manageable.

The consequence was that I met with disappointments from time to time, which I felt severely. To-day is the third reading of the Indian Bill in the House of Commons, after long vexatious debates in the Committee, impeding its progress under different pretensions. After the Bill has passed the Lower House, will lose no time in ascertaining how it will stand in the Upper Branch, and will immediately leave London without waiting for the final result. I will proceed direct to Bristol next week, and on my way to [from ?] London I will endeavour to visit my acquaintances at Bath and its vicinity. I deeply regret that I should have been prevented from fulfilling my intention this week, by circumstances over which I had no control.

I feel very much obliged by your kind suggestions contained in my son's letter. You may depend on my adhering to them. I intend to leave this place a little before ten a.m., that I may arrive there on the morning of the following day. Before I leave London I hope to be able to procure the situation for your young relative. Pray present my kindest regards to Miss Castle, and believe me, dear Madam,

Yours very sincerely,
RAMMOHUN ROY.

Three days after this letter (July 27th) we find Rammohun writing to Miss Mary Carpenter, "happy to observe from the communications of his son and his friends at Bristol that Dr. Carpenter is perfectly well, and has been discharging his duty as a faithful minister of Christ with his usual zeal and piety."

The delay attending his Bristol visit is further explained in another note to Miss Kiddell, dated 48, Bedford Square, August 16th, 1833:—

Dear Madam,—I have now the pleasure of informing you that I feel relieved, and will proceed to Stapleton Grove on Thursday next. I beg you will excuse this short letter as I am incessantly engaged in making preparations, particularly in writing letters to India and in different parts of this country. Pray give my love to my son and my kind regards to Miss Castle and believe me, dear Madam, yours very sincerely,

RAMMOHUN ROY.

P.S.—Miss Hare presents her compliments to yourself and Miss Castle.—
R. R.

At last the great measure which legalized the twenty odd years, transition of Indian government from a trading company to an Empire was finally enacted. The East India Bill received the Royal Assent on August 20. The Charter, then and thus renewed, made the Company less than ever a commercial agency and more more than ever a political. It was virtually the last Charter. A precarious renewal in 1853 ended in the government of India being taken over by the Queen in 1858. But Rammohun was not pleased with the legislative activity of the Reformed Parliament, as may be seen from this letter to Mr. Woodford.

48, Bedford Square,
August 22nd, 1833.

My dear Sir,—I was glad to hear from Mr. Carey some time ago that you and Mrs. W. were in good health when he saw you last; and Sir Henry Strachey, whom I had the pleasure of seeing about three weeks ago, has confirmed the same information. He is indeed an extraordinary man; and I feel delighted whenever I have an opportunity of conversing with that philosopher. I have been rather poorly for some days past; I am now getting better, and entertain a hope of proceeding to the country in a few days, when I will endeavour to pay you a visit in Taunton. The reformed Parliament has disappointed the people of England; the ministers may perhaps redeem their pledge during next session. The failure of several mercantile houses in Calcutta has produced much distrust both in India and England. The news from Portugal is highly gratifying, though another struggle is expected. I hope you will oblige me by presenting to Mrs. W., wiih my best respects, the accompanying copy of a translation, giving an account of the system of religion which prevailed in Central India at the time of the invasion of that country by Alexander the Great.

RAMMOHUN ROY.

A singular pathos attaches to this letter, which is the last we have preserved to us from Rammohun's pen. Its wide outlook, personal, political, historical, is characteristic of the

man, but his disappointment with the new Parliament is more difficult to explain. The Session had given birth to Lord Ashley's first Factory Act, and decreed the abolition of West Indian slavery,—no small achievements even for a reformed legislative machine. Possibly the terms of the new Charter were not to Rammohun's mind. Yet perhaps in this connection it would be well to recall what Mr. Arnot said in his obituary sketch in the *Asiatic Journal* before referred to:

Though a decided reformer, he was generally a moderate one. For his own country he did not propose even an Indian legislative council like Mr. Rickards', and he deemed the English more capable of governing his countrymen well than the natives themselves. A reference of measure of internal policy to a few of the most distinguished individuals in the European and native community, for their suggestions, previous to such measures being carried into law, was the utmost he asked in the present state of the Indian public mind. He not only always contended, at least among Europeans, for the necessity of continuing British rule for at least forty or fifty years to come, for the good of the people themselves; but he stood up firmly against the proposals of his more radical friends, for exchanging the East India Company's rule for a Colonial form of Government.

The reasons he adduced for this position are not wanting in shrewdness. "A Colonial form of Government," be it remembered, did not then mean colonial self-government. Mr. Arnot continued:

His argument was, that in all matters connected with the colonies, he had found from long observation that the Minister was absolute, and the majority of the House of Commons subservient, there being no body of persons there who had any adequate motive to thwart the Government in regard to distant dependencies of the British Crown. The change proposed was, therefore, in his estimation, a change from a limited Government, presenting a variety of efficient checks on any abuse oi its powers, for an absolute despotism.

His suggestions for the reform of Indian Government were thus of no extreme type. Yet mild as they were, they were not embodied in the East India Bill. His elaborate recom-

mendations submitted to the Parliamentary Committee and to the British public had not obtained legislative endorsement.

But whatever may have led to his estrangement from the Grey Ministry, which he had at first applauded with enthusiasm, it need not now specially concern us. For Rammohun's political career was over. The series of brilliant services which mark him out as the pioneer of Indian freedom may be said to have ended when King William gave his assent to the East India Bill. The less than forty days which remained to Rammohun Roy after that event were spent outside of the arena of public questions.

About the closing weeks of his life there gathered many shadows. His was a sunset not of flaming sky and gorgeous cloud-wreath, but of struggling beams and weeping mist. Sandford Arnot insisted that "during the last period of his life his manners were much changed and the powers of his mind seemed to be decaying." This charge was stoutly denied by his staunch Unitarian friends, and may have been due only to Arnot's disappointed rapacity. The bluntest statement of the Rajah's difficulties is given in a private letter from the Sanskrit scholar, Horace Hayman Wilson, to Babu Ram Comul Sen, written 21st December, 1833—three months after Rammohun's death—but published in the *Indian Mirror*, July 15, 1872.

Ram Mohun had grown very stout, and looked full and flushed when I saw him. It appears also that mental anxiety contributed to aggravate his complaint. He had become embarrassed for money, and was obliged to borrow of his friends here; in doing which he must have been exposed to much annoyance, as people in England would as soon part with their lives as their money. Then Mr. Sandford Arnot, whom he had employed as his secretary, importuned him for the payment of large sums which he called arrears of salary, and threatened Ram Mohun, if not paid, to do what he has done since his death—claim as his own writing all that Ram Mohun published in England. In short, Ram Mohun had got amongst a low, needy,

unprincipled set of people, and found out his mistake, I suspect, when too ate, which preyed upon his spirits and injured his health.

As this letter was written after conversation with Mr. Hare's brother, it may be taken for trustworthy testimony. Pecuniary embarrassment was a misfortune from which Rammohun had never suffered before. His sons in India, according to the letter of Babu Nagendra Nath Chatterjee of Jan. 2, 1883, reporting the testimony of Babu Nanda Kishore Bose, 'neglected to send him money latterly,"—a neglect which seems the less excusable in the light of the large pension he had secured for the family from the King of Delhi. His wealth, actual or prospective, being in India, he could not realize it in England. Babu N. Bose declares (in letter cited above) that owing to the lack of remittances from India, Rammohun, who had previously "refrained from dining with Englishmen," "was compelled from sheer necessity to dine with the Carpenters." The revolt of his parasites, however, only throws into clearer contrast the firm loyalty of his Unitarian friends. He had been living for some time now at the house of Mr. Hare, and the daughter [sister] of Mr. David Hare—his educational ally in Calcutta—was his devoted attendant to the end.

The long-looked-for journey to Bristol was taken at last. Early in September the Rajah arrived at Stapleton Grove*

* [Stapleton Grove is an agreeable and commodious mansion, which might well be selected as an example of an English gentleman's country residence. It had belonged to Mr. Michael Castle, a highly esteemed Bristol merchant, and one of Dr. Carpenter's congregation. On the death of that gentleman, and shortly after that of his wife, Dr. Carpenter undertook the charge (they had requested him to fulfil) of being one of the guardians of their only child, a young lady of great promises. As neither Dr. Carpenter's professional engagements, nor the nature of his own establishment, authorised his seeking the privilage he would so greatly have valued of receiving his distinguished friend in his own house, it had been arranged soon after the Raja's arrival in England, that whenever he was able to visit Bristol he should take up his

on the outskirts of that city, the hospitable home of Miss Kiddell and Miss Castle, where his adopted son was being educated. With Rammohun came his two Hindu servants Ramhurry Doss and Ramrotun Mukerjee, neither of whom proved models of domestic loyalty,—and the ever faithful Miss Hare. Dr. Carpenter was in Bristol at the time, and Mr. Estlin was Rammohun's medical adviser and friend.

Doubtless the Rajah, however worried by the claims of the extortionate Arnot, and however anxious about his future, would feel Stapleton Grove to be something like a haven of rest. He was among cultured religious people whose fidelity was beyond question. He was entertained and accompanied by admiring and sympathetic women. And his adopted boy was with him. It is pleasant to reflect on this little lull, of less than a fortnight, between a career full of conflict and what Browning calls "the last fight and the best."

One menace to the tranquility of his stay at the Grove was perhaps offered by the religious eagerness of the hospitable circle in which he moved. On the two Sundays he was able to do so, he worshipped with his friends at Lewin's Mead Chapel; and they showed no slight desire to secure from him a confession of Christian faith. Mr. Estlin recorded in his diary for Sept. 9 that Rammohun had in his hearing, declared "he denied the Divinity of Christ," but "distinctly asserted his belief in the Divine mission of Christ." Rev. John Foster* bore witness to the fact that on the 11th of September the Rajah "avowed unequivocally his belief in the resurrection of Christ and in the Christian miracles generally.

abode at Stapleton Grove, where Miss Kiddel and Miss Castle esteemed it a high honour to receive him, and would do all in their power to render agreeable his stay in the neighbourhood. Last Days in England.—Edi.]

* Quoted in "The Last Days in England of the Rajah Rammohun Roy," by Mary Carpenter, Trubner, 1866.

At the same time he said that the internal evidence of Christianity had been the most decisive of his conviction." Mr. Estlin's diary for the 11th attests that the Rajah gave an account of the process which he went through in arriving at his present religious conclusions : "his belief in the resurrection of Christ, as the foundation of his faith in the general resurrection, he firmly declared."

The Rev. William Jay, of Bath, confesses to receiving a similar impression. He preached on June 17th, 1832, in Rowland Hill's chapel, a sermon on "The Riches of His Goodness," and among his hearers were the Lord Mayor of London and the Rajah. Mr. Jay says in his advertisement dated 1843* :

"When the service was over the Rajah came into the chapel house and pressed for leave, at his own expense, to print the sermon for distribution among his friends." . . . "The author, with regard to this very extraordinary man, cannot help remarking that not only from the circumstance of his espousing this sermon (which, though not highly doctrinal, has allusions and intimations which would not accord with some theology), but from subsequent intercourse, as also from the testimony of others, he is persuaded that though at his first embracing Christianity he was Unitarian in his views, he was after he came to this country a sincere and earnest enquirer after evangelical truth, and would have professed his adoption of it had he not been prematurely removed by death.'†

In this connection we may mention another witness. The Rev. Richard Warner, Rector of Great Chalfield, Wilts., published in 1832 a sermon on "Charity, the Greatest of the Christian Graces," with a Dedication to Rammohun Roy‡, in which

* Works of William Jay, vol. vii., page 100 (London, 1843).

† A glimpse of the heart of the man is given in an incident mentioned by Mr. Jay. The worthy divine had told the old story : "When Dr. Doddridge asked his little daughter, who died so early, why everybody seemed to love her, she answered, 'I cannot tell, unless it be because I love everybody.'" He adds in a footnote : "Around this anecdote the Rajah, in the copy he sent the preacher, had drawn a pencil line."

‡ Quoted in pp. 22 and 23 of "A learned Indian in search of a Religion," by William Hamilton Drummond, D.D., London, 1833.

the Rajah is extolled "for the labours in which he exercises himself for the diffusion of the Light of Christianity and the promotion of Evangelical Love among an hundred millions of his countrymen." The worthy Rector proceeds :

Rajah, never shall I forget the long and profoundly interesting conversation which passed between us a few days ago. . . . Nor will the noble declaration fade from my recollection, that you were not only ready to sacrifice station, property and even life itself to the advancement of a religion which (in its genuine purity and simplicity proved its descent from the God of Love, . . . but that you should consider the abstaining from such a course as the non-performance of one of the Highest Duties imposed upon rational, social, and accountable man ! . . . May God prosper your benevolent endeavours to spread......the knowledge of Christ and the practice of Christian Charity !

This enthusiastic clergyman signs himself "Your friend and brother in Christ."

The diary of Mr. Estlin, published in Miss Marry Carpenter's work cited above, furnishes the fullest account of the last days of Rammohun Roy. On Thursday, the 19th, he found the Rajah ill in fever. From Mr. H. W. Wilson we learn that "it was thought he had the liver complaint, and his medical treatment was for that, not for determination to the head." But it was, after all, the overworked brain that was giving out. Mr. Estlin (on the 19th) noted the headache which accompanied the fever, and that he slept with his eyes much open. He needed a nurse. The medical man suggested that Miss Hare be allowed to attend to him. The sick Hindu objected on the score of propriety. Mr. Estlin reassured him as to British notions on that head, and David Hare's daughter was forthwith installed as nurse to her father's friend and her own. Mr. Estlin on the 22nd remarked on Miss Hare's weariless watchfulness and great influence with the Rajah : "He is evidently much attached to her, and her regard for him is quite filial,"—a pleasing fact to remember

of the lone Hindu's last days.* Next day (the 23rd) "the head appearing the organ most affected, leeches were applied." But the illness moved on towards its fatal issue.

The Rajah seemed to pass much of his waking time in prayer. What special burdens weighed on his mind and pressed out his entreaties, we have no means of knowing. His utterance of the sacred "AUM"—one of the last words he was heard to utter—suggested that at the solitary gate of death as well as in the crowded thoroughfare of life the contemplation of Deity was the chief pre-occupation of his soul. Soon he began to lose all power of consciousness and speech, and yet he occasionally recovered sufficiently to express his deep thankfulness to the kind friends about him.

On Friday, the 27th September, the final crisis came. Mr. Estlin thus describes it—

> The Rajah became worse every few minutes, his breathing more rattling and impeded, his pulse imperceptible. He moved about his right arm constantly and his left arm a little a few hours before his death It was a beautiful moonlight night; on one side of the window, as Mr. Hare, Miss Kiddell and I looked out of it, was the calm rural midnight scene; on the other, this extraordinary man dying. I shall never forget the moment. Miss Hare, now hopeless and overcome, could not summon courage to hang over the dying Rajah as she did while soothing or feeding him ere hope had left her, and remained sobbing in the chair near; the young Rajah was generally holding his hand. . . . At half-past two Mr. Hare came into my room and told me it was all over. His last breath was drawn at 2.25.

So passed the soul of the great Hindu. His was a life of transition, from the time when he broke with his boyish faith and his father's house, all through the stormy years of his manhood; and now the greatest transition of all had come. The restless and valiant seeker after truth had at last arrived

* [Mr. Estlin says:—"The Rajah repeatedly acknowledged, during his illness, his sense of the kindness of all around him, and in strong language expressed the confidence he felt in his medical advisers." Edi].

and attained. The pathos and poetry of that death-scene will linger long in the wistful imagination of India. The strange and distant western region, the rich rural landscape sleeping under the glamour of an autumn moon, the solitary country house standing out distinct in the silvery mystery of the moonlight, eveything wrapped in tranquillity and hushed to perfect stillness, Nature and Night combining to suggest the presence of the Eternal Calm; and within, the spirit of the great emancipator struggling to burst the fetters of mortality, and at last achieving the freedom and peace of the mystery which he had given his life to apprehend:—here is a weirdly-mingled memory for the spiritual descendants of Rammohun, the myriad millions yet to be of an enlightened and enfranchised East.

On the day after death the body was subjected to a medical examination by Mr. Estlin, assisted by several friends. The cause of death was found to be "fever producing great prostration of the vital powers, and accompanied by inflammation of the brain." The fact that the brain was inflamed, of which the usual symptoms had not appeared, was ascertained only by this *post mortem* inspection. Brain fever, brought on by financial and other worry, following on a life of intense mental activity, was thus the natural termination of the Rajah's career.

Mr. Estlin's diary records of the deceased that "his Brahminical thread was over the left shoulder and under the right, like a skein of common brown thread." The same evening the body was placed in the shell and leaden coffin under the superintendence of Mr. Estlin, who took care that the "Brahminical thread was never removed." One of Rammohun's servants, Ramrotun, was compelled—"much against his will"—to attend as witness of these facts.

The interment of the great Brahman was characteristic of

his career. In a postscript which is attached to Dr. Lant Carpenter's funeral Review, (London and Bristol, 1833) we have at once the narrative and explanation of Rammohun's singular obsequies :

The knowledge that the Rajah had in various ways manifested solicitude to preserve his caste with a view both to his usefulness and to the security of his property, and the belief that it might be endangered if he were buried among other dead or with Christian rites, operated to prevent the interment of his remains in any of the usual cemeteries. Besides this the Rajah had repeatedly expressed the wish that in case of his dying in England, a small piece of freehold ground might be purchased for his burying place, and a cottage be built on it for the gratuitous residence of some respectable poor person, to take charge of it. Every difficuly, however, was removed by the offer of Miss Castle, in which she had the warm accordance of all her intimate friends, to appropriate to the object a beautifully adapted spot in a shrubbery near her lawn, and under some fine elms. There this revered and beloved person was interred, on the 18th of October,* about 2 p.m. The coffin was borne on men's shoulders, without a pall, and deposited in the grave, without any ritul and in silence. Everything conspired to give an impressive and affecting solemnity to his obsequies, Those who followed him to the grave and sorrowed there were his son and his two native servants, the members of the families of Stapleton Grove and Bedford Square, the Gurdians of Miss Castle and two of her nearest relatives, Mr. Estlin, Mr. Foster, and Dr. Jerrard, together with several ladies connected with the attendants already enumerated ; and as there could be no regular entry of the interment in any official registers, those who witnessed it have signed several copies of a record drawn up for the purpose, in case such a document should be needed for any legal purposes.

So he was buried. Alone in his death as in his life, in alien soil, but carefully protected to the last from violation of his native customs. The silence that fell at the grave which closed so active and vocal a life is strangely suggestive. Rammohun's last word remains unspoken.

* In Rev. J. Scott Porter's funeral sermon, the *Bistol Glazette* is credited with the statement :—"He was interred on Tuesday, 15th October." Dr. Carpenter's date above is less likely to be in error.

The grave in which he was laid was not, however, to be the final resting place. Ten years later a new home was found for his earthly remains in the cemetery of Arno's Vale near Bristol. There the Rajah's great friend and comrade, Dwarka Nath Tagore, who had come over from India on pious pilgrimage to the place where the Master died, erected a tomb of stone. It was in 1872—nearly forty years after Rammohun had passed out of the region of sensuous existence—that this inscription was added :—

BENEATH THIS STONE REST THE REMAINS OF
RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY BAHADOOR.
A CONSCIENTIOUS AND STEADFAST BELIEVER IN THE UNITY
OF THE GODHEAD ;
HE CONSECRATED HIS LIFE WITH ENTIRE DEVOTION TO THE
WORSHIP OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT ALONE.
TO GREAT NATURAL TALENTS HE UNITD A THOROUGH
MASTERY OF MANY LANGUAGES,
AND EARLY DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF AS ONE OF THE
GREATEST SCHOLARS OF HIS DAY.

HIS UNWEARIED LABOURS TO PROMOTE THE SOCIAL, MORAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, HIS EARNEST ENDEAVOURS TO SUPPRESS IDOLATRY AND THE RITE OF SUTTEE, AND HIS CONSTANT ZEALOUS ADVOCACY OF WHATEVER TENDED TO ADVANCE THE GLORY OF GOD AND THE WELFARE OF MAN, LIVE IN THE GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF HIS COUNTRYMEN.

THIS TABLET
RECORDS THE SORROW AND PRIDE WITH WHICH HIS MEMORY
IS CHERISHED BY HIS DESCENDANTS.
HE WAS BORN IN RADHANAGORE, IN BENGAL, IN 1774,
ANE DIED AT BRISTOL, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1833.

Another monument, on less durable material, belongs to Bristol. In the vestibule of the Museum hangs a full length portrait of Rammohun, which was painted by Mr. H. P. Briggs, R.A.

As was to be expected, the demise of the Hindu Theist led to the delivery of many eloquent and impressive funeral

discourses.* Among these many be mentioned Dr. Lant Carpenter's at Bristol, and Rev. W. J. Fox's at Finsbury Chapel, London, both of which contain much valuable biographic material. They display an easily explicable desire to identify the late Brahman with Christianity, but bear also striking witness to the power the Rajah had shown of inspiring warm personal affection. It is the ardent and admiring friend, not the spiritual undertaker, which appears in the preacher. That Rammohun should have rivetted to himself Hindu souls, of the same clime and blood as he was, and groping as he had groped after the light behind the cloud of ancient Indian religion, was not to be wondered at so much as the devoted friendships which he created among foreigners, of alien ways of thinking and believing, whom he had known only for a comparatively short period. It is no small testimony to his character that even a slight acquaintance with him was enough to stir stolid and phlegmatic Englishmen to something very nearly a passin of love for him. There must have been much love in the man to evoke such devotion.

A jarring note in the general chorus of eulogy was struck by the biographic writings of M. Sandford Arnot, who had been Secretary to the Rajah from his arrival in England until a few months prior to his death. This man contributed a sketch of his deceased master to the November number of

*[There were notices of the mournful event in many pulpits. The Rev. Dr. Kenney, of St. Olav's, Southwark whose ministrty Rammohun Roy had frequently attended, preached a funeral sermon at the request of his parishoners. Five sermons were printed, viz, those by Dr. Carpenter preached in Lewin's Mead Chapel, Bristol, by Rev. R. Aspland in the New Gravel Pit Meeting, Hackney, by Dr. W. H. Drummond in the Presbyterian Church of Strand Street, Dublin, by the Rev. J. Scott Porter in the Meeting House of the first Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast, and the one by Rev. W. J. Fox in Finsbary Chapel, London, Edi.]

the *Asiatic Journal* (1833), in which besides speaking somewhat harshly of the change that came over the mind and manners of the Rajah in the last months of his life, he suggested that the Rajah's literary work in English owed more than was generally supposed to his secretary's assistance. Dr. Lant Carpenter replied with some severity to this charge, in his published memorials of the great Hindu, as did also Mr. John Hare in the *Times* and other public prints. Arnot made rejoinder in the January number of the *Asiatic Journal*, specifying his services to the Rajah, and remarking, "I did no more than I suppose every other secretary does, that is, ascertains from his principal what he wishes to say or prove on any given subject, receives a rough outline, and works it out in his own way, making as many points and giving as much force of diction as he can." We may readily admit that Rammohun made free use of secretarial help, without impairing to any extent worth considering the genuineness of his authorship, or the reality of his singular command of the English language.* Sub-

* [Dr. Carpenter has left on record the following authentic information on the subject on the authority of the Hare family: "Possessed of the Raja's unbounded confidence, acquainted with all his movements, and enabled to judge with complete accuracy of his habits and dispositions, the unhesitating and unequivocal testimony of this (Hare) family, one and all, to the unvarying purity of his conduct and the refined delicacy of his sentiments, is as decisive as it is valuable. I had myself, repeated opportunities of observing with what earnest respect he appreciated the true delicacy in the female character: and I learnt that, while he always maintained his habitual politeness to the sex, and may therefore have misled the superficial observer, he manifested a very prompt and clear discrimination as to individuals; and that he commonly expressed strong dislike, and even disgust, where they seemed to him to depart from that true modesty which is essential to its excellence.

Mr. Joseph Hare—his brother fully agreeing with him—assures me that the Rajah was constantly in the habit of dictating, to those who were for the time acting as amanunses, in phraseology requiring no

editors and secretaries may render most valuable aid, but their minor labours may never be mistaken for the work of the Chief. If he be a foreigner, it is their duty to preserve his English from lapses into foreign idiom and to suggest idiomatic utterances in their native tongue in place of his more colourless expressions. But editing is not composing. This Arnot as a journalist very well knew, and his effort to magnify his secretarial functions at the expense of his patron's literary reputation ought never to have been made. The pecuniary claims with which it was preceded and accompanied betray the extortionate purpose of the whole miserable business.

A controversy of a nobler kind arose concerning the religious position which the Rajah finally adopted. There was a very natural desire on the part of his Christian friends to claim him as in the end a decided Christian. Reverends W. Jay and Richard Warner did, we have seen, declare him a signal convert to Evangelical religion. In a conversation on the Lord's Prayer with the father of Mr. G. N. Aitchison (as reported in a letter from the latter to Prof. Max Muller, of date Sept. 27, 1883) Rammohun is stated to have declared his conviction that "that prayer was never made by *man*:

improvement, whether for the press or for the formation of official document—such verbal amendments only excepted, as his own careful revision supplied before the final completion of the manuscript: that he often had recourse to 'friends to write from his dictation; among others to himself and the members of his family: that it is his full conviction, that from the day of the Raja's arrival in this country, he stood in no need of any assistance except that of a mere *mechanical* hand to write: and that he has often been struck—and recollects that he was particularly so at the time the Raja was writing his 'Answers to the queries on the Judicial and Revenue departments'—with his quick and correct diction, and his immediate perception of occasional errors when he came to revise the matter. These facts I and others have repeatedly heard from the Hares; and I rest with conviction upon them." Last days of Rammohun Roy.—Edi.]

its author could have been nothing less than Divine." Rev. John Foster held him to have made virtual confession, a few days before he died, of the Divine authority of Christ. Mr. Estlin, as already recorded, reported more precisely Rammohun's disbelief in the Divinity, but acceptance of the Divine mission of Jesus. Both these friends of his assert the Rajah's unequivocal conviction of the Resurrection of Jesus. We cannot wonder at Unitarian Christians regarding him as an illustrious champion of their views. But we may not accept offhand the testimony of these eager witnesses. Their differing estimates of his faith had been anticipated by him. Babu N. Bose used to tell how "Rammohun Roy before leaving for England, told him that the followers of every prevailing religion would reckon him, after his death, as one of their co-religionists. The Mohammedans would call him a Mohammedan, the Hindus would call him a Vedantic Hindu, the Christians a Unitarian Christian." But Babu N. Bose added, "he really belonged to no sect. His religion was Universal Theism." As he believed this principle to be the quintessence of every religion, he was able to approach the advocates of the most different creeds with a sympathy and an emphasis on points of agreement which they could only interpret as complete adhesion. The impression thus made was deepened by his extreme Oriental courtesy which seemed to not unfriendly Westerns to pass into over-great complaisance. Mr. James Sutherland, who was warmly attached to the Rajah, could write (in the *Indian Gazette*, Feb. 18, 1834):—

On questions of religious faith Rammohun Roy was in general too pliant, perhaps from his excessive fear of giving offence, or wounding the feelings of anybody, which accounts for the controversy which has arisen about his religious opinions. In fact, no matter what the creed of the parties with whom he conversed on such a subject, he was sure to impress them with an idea, either that he was of their peculiar faith, or

that they had converted him to it. A lady once observed to me that she was rejoiced to find that he was a sincere Trinitarian, and that he had merely gone to Unitarian places of worship from curiosity, as he had attended Quakers' meetings, the Jewish Synagogue, etc.,

Full weight must be given to these considerations. But they are not sufficient to account for the impressien that the mind of the Rajah was in his later days moving towards more positive religious convictions. Sandford Arnot, whose testimony is not without value after allowance has been made for his one distorting motive roundly asserts that "in regard to religious belief" he saw "no reason to think that the slightest change took place in the Rajah's mind for the last forty or fifty years, that is, since the period when about sixteen years of age he began to doubt Hinduism." But this statement is no sooner made than Arnot—apparently quite unconsciously —goes on to show how the Rajah's mind was actually changing. Arnot's scornful disbelief in Rammohun's reputed movement towards Christianity makes the following remarks of his all the more striking evidence :—

As he advanced in age, he became more strongly impressed with the importance of religion to the welfare of society, and the pernicious effects of scepticism. In his younger years, his mind had been deeply struck with the evils of believing too much, and against that he directed all his energies; but in his latter days he began to feel that there was as much, if not greater, danger in the tendency to believe too little.

Friends and believers in the New India growing up under British rule will warmly sympathise with the observations which next follow :—

He often deplored the existence of a party which had sprung up in Calcutta, composed principally of imprudent young men, some of them possessing talent, who had avowed themselves sceptics in the widest sense of the term. He described it as partly composed of East Indians, partly of the Hindu youth, who, from education had learnt to reject their own faith without substituting any other. These he thought more debased than the most bigoted Hindu, and their principles the bane of all morality.

His sense of this, the gravest danger of the Indian people, was only deepened by his experiences in the West :—

His strong aversion to infidelity was by no means diminished during his visit to Englahd and France ; on the contrary, the more he mingled with society in Europe, the more strongly he became persuaded that religious belief is the only sure groundwotk of virtue. "If I were to settle with my family in Europe," he used to say, "I would never introduce them to any but religious persons, and from amongst them only would I select my friends: amongst them I find such kindness and friendship that I feel as if surrounded by my own kindred."

Next comes still more impressive evidence—from such a witness—as to the Rajah's changed mental attitude :—

He evidently now began to suspect that the Unitarian form of Christianity was too much rationalized (or sophisticated, perhaps, I may say) to be suitable to human nature. He remarked in the Unitarians a want of that fervour of zeal and devotion found among other Sects, and felt doubts whether a system appealing to reason only was calculated to produce a permanent influence on mankind.

Revulsion from the rationalism of Unitarians is a very decided portent of religious evolution. A kindred reaction affected him in regard to the philosophy then prevalent in England. Arnot continues :—

He perceived the same defect in the Utilitarian philosophy, and ridiculed the notion that man, a being governed by three powers,—reason imagination and the passions,—could be directed by those who addressed themselves only or chiefly to the first of these powers, overlooking the importance of the two other elements of human nature, which must continue to exert an everlasting influence. . .

There is much to confirm, there is nothing to impugn, these statements of Arnot. They bear every mark of being thoroughly veracious and are made still less open to question by Arnot's own contemptuous disbelief in Rammohun's supposed Christianity. They present additional indications of a kind which have been numerous throughout Rammohun's whole career, and which have grown more numerous towards its close. We have seen him lean increasingly towards

fellowship with Anglicans, claiming an Anglican clergyman as his "parish priest." We have observed his remarkable anticipation that India would eventually become Christian. We may discount, but cannot wholly disallow, the witness of John Foster and J. B. Estlin concerning Rammohun's faith in the Resurrection.

To what do these things points? To Rammohun having gradually glided into Unitarian or even Evangelical Christianity? By no means. Rammohun was no Evangelical Christian, like Mr. Kenney or Mr. Jay. He was no Christian even of the type of Dr. Carpenter.* The conscious and complete surrender of the will to the authority of Jesus which is involved in conversion to either of these forms of Christian life is an experience through which, according to the evidence before us, Rammohun never passed. With the awful demand, "If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." we have no adequate ground for supposing that Rammohun complied. But a dispassionate view of the marvellous history of the man discredits the fancy that his convictions showed no change throughout his career of reform, even more utterly than it discredits the idea that he was a Christian. It points conclusivly to the fact that Rammohun's awakened life was one of continuous transition. From the time when he left his father's house in revolt against conventional Hinduism to the last days in Stapleton Grove, his mind was moving on. It was driven forward by the imperious personal problem: Given an intensely religious nature, with profound emotions,

* Such was the deliberate conviction of the authoress of this Life. She stated her decision to the continuator that "Rammohun was not a Christian. He did not believe in Christ as we believe in Him."

large imagination and fine ethical sense, how to find expression for the same consonantly with the claims of a keen and comprehensive intellect.

The solution involved in the first instance a resolute break with the traditional polytheism. The process was to begin with chiefly negative. The youthful Reformer was for showing up the mistakes of all the religions. To gain the freedom demanded by his religious impulses, he was glad to welcome the destructive aid of rationalism. But rationalism was to him ever a means, never an end. His end was persistently religious, and therefore eventually positive. So he soon passed from an attitude towards all religions that was critical if not hostile, to an attitude that was sympathetic. He would extract the rational elements out of Hinduism and appropriate the ethical contents of Christianity. He tried to find a common denominator for Hindu and Christian Unitarianism. The device might please his intellect' but European Unitarianism left little room for the development of his warmblooded Oriental passion for religion. The founding of the Brahmo Samaj showed an effort not merely to satisfy the large ambitions of a devout and comprehensive intellect, but to meet the more specifically religious needs of a genuine fellowship and of a social "morality touched with emotion." Intellectualism was still in the ascendent, but the driving power was religion. With his arrival in England the process of evolution was naturally vastly accelerated. His knowledge of religious and philosophic systems was fertilized by close contact with the life out of which they grew or with which they were supposed to correspond. In especial, he came to know Christianity, not through its books or through isolated persons or groups as in India, but in its collective life and in its domestic civilization. He came to adopt a more positive and concrete, and perhaps a less merely speculative view of religion.

For the negative and disintegrating influence of the analytic intellect he developed an increasing horror. He denounced its effects in the scepticism of Calcutta and still more of Paris. He felt the barrenness and impotence of the Utilitarian philosophy. Man was much more than an intellectual machine. He had an imagination and a heart, and unless these were stirred creed or calculus or code were of slight avail. The need of religion, as distinguished from plausible speculations, became ever more paramount in Rammohun's eyes. Religion kindled imagination, roused passion, set the conscience in motion, as well as appeased the reason. But judged by these standards, Unitarian Christianity with which he had once hoped to effect much, was seriously lacking. It was too exclusively intellectual. In the other Christian sects there might be less of reason and reasoning, but there was manifestly more of religion. Rammohun was coming to recognise more and more that religion was a whole-human thing: it was a force: it was a vital soul-kindling soul-begetting power: it was infinitely more than any causal theory of the Universe: it was never to be confounded with an arid rationalism or a bloodless ethicism. The primal religious impulse of Rammohun's nature was at last disentangling itself from the intellectualism under which it had long been working, at first joyously, but latterly with painful sense of oppression.

It will not do, therefore, to dub Rammohun Roy "Universal Theist" with Babu N. Bose, and pass on as though that formula could express his ever-changing career. At the outset his Theism was intellectually not far from the Deism of last century, in the end it was religiously not far from the spirit of Christianity. In the earlier stages of his emancipation, his faith seemed to differ little from the fictitious "natural religion" of the eighteenth century philosophers, save for a strong infusion of Oriental passion. Towards the close, we

see him turning with weary disgust from the fanciful abstractions of the speculative intellect to the dynamic facts of human nature and of human history. How much further he would have moved in the direction of positive religion if his life had been prolonged for any considerable period, it is idle to conjecture. The theological transition which lasted all his life was at his death left incomplete. We may not guess at its completion. It is enough for us to observe its direction.

These conclusions as to the inner movement of Rammohun's mind suggest his place in history. The life is the life work. His own career of constant but incomplete transition constituted him the leader and the instrument of a kindred transition among his fellow-countrymen. The path he trod they seem destined to follow; more or less rapidly as opportunity and inducement vary, but perhaps none the less surely because the goal towards which he was moving was never by him visibly attained. Rammohun stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future. He was the arch which spanned the gulf that yawned between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and Science, between despotism and democrocy, between immobile custom and a conservative progress, between a bewildering polytheism and a pure, if vague, Theism. He was the mediator of his people, harmonizing in his own person often by means of his own solitary sufferings, the conflicting tendencies of immemorial tradition and of inevitable enlightenment.

The impact of Christian civilization, with its wide freedom and strong tolerance, upon the unreconciled juxtaposition of Islam and Hinduism, introduced into the life of the people of India a painful crisis. There were new and fierce revulsions, there were attractions, powerful though hidden: there was an intense mental effervescence: there was the sudden

generation of strange and composite ideas: there was, in short, a sort of silent explosion within the spiritual frame, which sent thrills of agony through every shattered and lacerated fragment. But the misery caused by the destructive consequences, although more obvious at first, cannot conceal the sympathetic and constructive forces at work. Of the result of this impact we may regard Rammohun as the personal type. He embodies the new spirit which arises from the compulsory mixture of races and faiths and civilizations,—he embodies its freedom of inquiry, its thirst for science, its large humane sympathy, its pure and sifted ethics; along with its reverent but not uncritical regard for the past, and prudent even timid disinclination towards revolt. But in the life of Rammohun we see what we hope yet to have shown us in the progress of India, that the secrect of the whole movement is religious. Amid all his wanderings Rammohun was saved by his faith. From the perfervid piety of his Pagan boyhood to the strong leanings which, in his latest years, he evinced towards Christianity he was led by his faith,—the purpose and passion of belief which he inherited from all the ages of India's history. He was a genuine outgrowth of the old Hindu stock; in a soil watered by new influences, and in an atmosphere charged with unwonted forcing power, but still a true scion of the old stock. The Rajah was no merely occidentalized Oriental, no Hindu polished into the doubtful semblance of a European. Just as little was he, if we may use the term without offence, a spiritual Eurasian. If we follow the right line of his development we shall find that he leads the way from the Orientalism of the past, not to, but through Western culture, towards a civilization which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both. He preserves continuity throughout, by virtue of his religion, which again supplied the motive

force of his progressive movement. The power that connected and restrained, as well as widened and impelled, was religion.

Rammohun thus presents a most instructive and inspiring study for the New India of which he is the type and pioneer, He offers to the new democray of the West a scarcely less valuable index of what our greatest Eastern dependency may yet become under the Imperial sway of the British commonalty. There can be little doubt that, whatever future the destinies may have in store for India, that future will be largely shaped by the life and work of Rammohun Roy. And not the future of India alone. We stand on the eve of an unprecedented intermingling of East and West. The European and the Asiatic streams of human development, which have often tinged each other before, are now approaching a confluence which bids fair to form the one ocean-river of the collective progress of mankind. In the presence of that greater Eastern Question,—with its infinite ramifications, industrial, political, moral and religious,—the international problems of the passing hour, even the gravest of them, seem dwarfed into parochial pettiness. The nearing dawn of these unmeasured possibilities only throws into clearer prominence the figure of the man whose life-story we have told. He was, if not the prophetic type, at least the precursive hint, of the change that is to come.

APPENDIX

IN MEMORIAM.

A Hymn by Harriet Martineau sung at Finsbury Chapel, Moorfields after a memorial sermon by Rev. W. J. Fox.

No faithless tears, O God ! we shed
For him who, to thine altars led,
A swallow from distant clime,
Found rest beneath the cherubim ;
In thee he rests from toil and pain,
O Father, hear our true Amen.

No faithless tears ! Led forth by Thee,
Meek pilgrim to the sepulchre,
For him thy truth from day to day,
Sprang up and blossomed by the way ;
Shalt thou not call thine own again ?
O bend to hear our deep Amen !

No faithless tears ! Though many dream
To see his face by Gange's stream ;
Though thousands wait on many a shore,
The voice that shall be heard no more ;
O, breathe Thy peace amid their pain,
And hear Thy children's loud Amen !

SONNETS.

(By Mary Carpenter).

I.

Thy Nation sat in darkness ; for the night
Of pagan gloom was o'er it ; Thou wast born
Midst superstition's ignorance forlorn :
Yet in thy breast there glowed a heavenly light
Of purest truth and love ; and to thy sight
Appeared the day-star of approaching morn.
What ardent zeal then thy life adorn,
From deep degrading guilt to lead aright
Thy fallen people ; to direct their view
To that bless'd sun of Righteousness, whence beams
Guidance to all that seek it—faithful—true ;
To call them to the Saviour's living streams
The cities of the east have heard thy voice—
"Nations behold your God ! rejoice – rejoice."

II

Exiled from home ev'n in thy earliest youth,
The healing balm of woman's love was pour'd
Into thy troubled breast : and thence were stor'd
Deep strings of gratitude and pitying ruth.—
To lead thy race to that primeval truth
Which bright and pure, on all alike bestow'd,
Points heavenward ; and to guide them on the road
Of Christian faith,—was thine ; but yet to soothe
Neglected woman ; to assert her right
To drink of wells of everlasting life ;
To snatch her, trembling midst the dismal night
Of pagan horrors, from the fiery strife
Of dark soul'd zealots—*this* must wake our love
This fervent raise our thanks for thee above.

III

Far from thy native clime, a sea-girt land
Sits thron'd among the nations ; in the breasts
Of all her sons immortal Freedom rests ;
And of her patriots many a holy band
Have sought to rouse the world from the command
Of that debasing tyrant who detests
The reign of truth and love. At their behests
The slave is free ! And Superstition's hand
Sinks powerless Hitherward thy steps were bent
To seek free commune with each kindred soul,
Whose highest powers are ever willing lent
To free their race from folly's dark control.
To our blest isle thou didst with transport come :
Here hast thou found thy last, thy silent home.

IV.

Thy work thou didst fulfil while yet 'twas day ;
And still right onward towards thy beacon tend
With faith and zeal. And now thy footsteps bend
Where Christian friendship offers thee the stay
Of sympathy and love. But who shall say
What joy was ours, the eager ear to lend
To all thy accents, and thy steps attend ?—
The Angel of the Lord hath called away
His faithful servant, at the evening hour,
While glowing tints still gild the western sky.
Yet though around our hearts dark sorrows lower,
And tears of sad regret must dim the eye,
We mourn not without hope. Thy race is run,
Enter thy rest ! Servant of God—'Well done!"

V.

Bright hopes of immortality were given
To guide thy dubious steps, and to cheer

Thine earthly pilgrimage. How firm and clear
Arose thy faith that as the Lord hath risen,
So all his followers shall meet in heaven !—
Thou art gone from us; but thy memory, dear
To all that knew thee, fades not : still we hear
And see thee yet as with us : nev'r are riven
The bands of Christian love! Thy mortal frame
With us is laid in holy silent rest :
Thy spirit is immortal ; and thy name
Shall by thy countrymen be ever blest.
Even from the tomb thy words with power shall rise,
Shall touch their hearts, and bear them to the skies.

Bristol, Oct. 1833.

VI.

When from afar we saw thy burning light
Rise gloriously o'er India's darkened shore,
In spirit we rejoiced ; and then still more
Rose high our admiration and delight,
When, steadfast to pursue thy course aright,
We saw thee brave fierce persecution's power.—
As yet we knew thee not,—but that blest hour
Which first disclosed thee to our longing sight
Awakened in us deepest Christian love,
And told us thou hadst sat at Jesus' feet.
But now a glowing halo from above
Circles our thoughts of thee, when to the seat
Of mercy, rapt in ardent prayer, we come,
"Our Father ! lead Thy wandering children home."

Bristol
Sunday Oct. 27th., 1833. M. C.

THE INTERMENT OF RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY.

At Stapleton Grove.

(By Miss Dale).

No voice, no whisper broke the deep repose,
When to the earth that sacred dust was given :
All silently the sacrifice arose
From kindling hearts, in one pure flame, to Heaven.
Pure from the sun of righteousness it came
Upon those hearts. Language, to common thoughts
Interpreter, had dimmed that holy flame ;
Or with the prism's power, to sight had brought
The varying hues which human frailty throws
O'er things divine. Oh never more misplaced,
Than at that grave where narrow bounds enclose
Him, whose diffuse love had all mankind embraced.

STAPLETON GRAVE.

The Raja's tomb.

(By Miss Acland.)

This is the spot ! There needs no sculptured line ;
No column marks the Rajah's lovely tomb ;
But shadowing elms there drooping boughs incline,
And shroud his cold remains in sacred gloom.
Yes ; far from Ganges' consecrated wave,
Beneath our pallid groves, and northern skies,
A stranger's hand hath laid thee in thy grave,
And strangers' tears have wept thine obsequies.
A stranger ? No ; thy "caste" was human kind ;
Thy home—wherever freedom's beacon shone ;

And England's noblest hearts exulting shrined
The turband offspring of a burning zone.
Pure generous mind ! all that was just and true,—
All that was lovely, holiest, brightest, best,—
Kindled thy soul of eloquence anew,
And woke responsive chords in every breast.
Sons of the western main around the hung,
While Indian lips unfolded Freedom's laws,
And grateful woman heard the Brahman's tongue
Proclaim her worth, and plead her widowed cause.
Ah ! why did Fortune dash with bitter doom,
That cup of high communion from thine hand,
And scatter, darkly withering o'er the tomb,
The blessings gathered for thy native land ?
Be hushed our murmurs ! He whose voice had won
Thee, heav'n-bound traveller, forth from pagan night,
In mercy called the trusting spirit on,
And bade it dwell with uncreated light.
Perchance when o'er thy loved paternal bower,
The sun of Righteousness shall healing rise,—
When India's children feel his noon-day power,
And mingle all in Christian sympathies,—
Hither their pilgrim footsteps duly bound,
With fervent zeal, these hallowed haunts shall trace,
And sweetly solemn tears bedew the ground
Where sleeps the friend and prophet of their race !

AUTO-BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In conformity with the wish, you have frequently expressed, that I should give you an outline of my life, I have now the pleasure to give you the following very brief sketch.

My ancestors were Brahmins of a high order, and from time immemorial were devoted to the religious duties of their race, down to my fifth progenitor, who about one hundred and forty years ago, gave up spiritual exercises for worldly pursuits and aggrandisement. His descendents ever since followed his example, and according to the usual fate of courtiers with various success, sometimes rising to honour and sometimes falling; sometimes rich and sometimes poor; sometimes excelling in success, sometimes miserable through disappointment. But my maternal ancestors, being of the sacerdotal order by profession as well as by birth, and of a family than which none holds a higher rank in that profession, have up to the present day uniformly adhered to a life of religious

* Miss Carpenter published this autobiographical sketch, in her Last Days of Raja Ram Mohun Roy with the following explanatory notice :—

"The following letter from Ram Mohun Roy himself first appeared in the Athenæum, and in the Literary Gazette; from one or other of which it was copied into various newspapers. It was written just before he went to France. It was probably designed for some distinguished person who had desired him to give an outline of his history; and he adopted this form for the purpose. The letter may be considered as addressed to his friend Mr. Gordon of Calcutta."

Miss Collet considered this letter spurious, but did not assign any reasons for her opinion. In any case it is worth preserving as the earliest biographical sketch of the Raja.

observances and devotion, preferring peace and tranquility of mind to the excitements of ambition and all the allurements of worldly grandeur.

In conformity with the usage of my parental race, and the wish of my father, I studied the Persian and Arabic languages,—these being indispensable to those who attached themselves to the courts of the Mahommedan princes; and agreeably to the usage of my maternal relations, I devoted myself to the study of the Sanskrit and the theological works written in it, which contain the body of Hindu literature, law and religion. When about the age of sixteen, I composed a manuscript calling in question the validity of the idolatrous system of the Hindoos. This, together with my known sentiments on the subject, having produced a coolness between me and my immediate kindred, I proceeded on my travels and passed through different countries, chiefly within, but some beyond the bounds of Hindoostan, with a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British power in India. When I had reached the age of twenty, my father recalled me and restored me to his favour; after which I first saw and began to associate with Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them, and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants; and I enjoyed the confidence of several of them even in their public capacity. My continued controversies with the Brahmins on the subject of their idolatry and superstition, and my interference with their custom of burning widows, and other pernicious practices, revived and increased their animosity against me; and through their influence with my family, my father was

again obliged to withdraw his countenance openly, though his limited pecuniary support was still continued to me.

After my father's death I opposed the advocates of idolatry with still greater boldness. Availing myself of the art of printing, now establishd in India, I published various works and pamphlets against their errors, in the native and foreign languages. This raised such a feeling against me, that I was at last deserted by every person except two or three Scotch friends, to whom, and the nation to which they belong, I always feel grateful.

The ground which I took in all my controversies was, not that of opposition to Brahminism, but to a perversion of it; and I endeavoured to show that the idolatry of the Brahmins was contrary to the practice of their ancestors, and the principles of the ancient books and authorities which they profess to revere and obey. Notwithstanding the violence of the opposition and resistance to my opinions several highly respectable persons, both among my own relations and others, began to adopt the same sentiments.

I now felt a strong wish to visit Europe, and obtain, by personal observation, a more thorough insight into its manners, customs, religion, and political institutions. I refrained, however, from carrying this intention into effect until the friends who coincided in my sentiments should be increased in number and strength. My expectations having been at length realized, in November 1830, I embarked for England, as the discussion of the East India company's Charter was expected to come on by which the treatment of the Natives of India, and its future government, would be determined for many years to come, and an Appeal to the King in Council, Against the Abolition of the Practice of Burning Widows, was to be heard before the Privy Council; and His Majesty, the Emperor of Delhi, had likewise commissioned me to bring before the authorities in England certain

encroachments on his rights by the East India Company. I accordingly arrived in England in April, 1831.

I hope, you will excuse the brevity of this sketch, as I have no leisure at present to enter into particulars, and,

I remain, &c.
RAMMOHUN ROY.

RAMMOHUN ROY—THE FATHER OF POLITICAL REGENERATION OF INDIA.

(By Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, in the course of a speech on the occasion of the celebration of the anniversary of the death of Raja Rammohun Roy. 27th Sept.. 1904.)

This day, 71 years ago, Raja Rammohun Roy died in the suburbs of Bristol in the beautiful mansion of Miss Castle, amid the tears and regrets of his English friends. In the estimation, however, of his own countrymen, he died an out-cast—our fathers would not eat and drink or associate with him—his very touch was polution to them. To-day he is the adored hero of our race—indisputably the mightiest product of English Education—the pioneer of all those public movements, which have in them the promises—the rich promises—of an abundant harvest of good—to whom we offer the spontaneous tribute of our hearts, leavened with the sad reflection that one so good, so true, so noble, should have been so dealt with. But that has always been the way of humanity. We bite the hand that feeds us and spurn the good that contains in it the messages of our salvation. We torture and crucify the blessed redeemer of mankind. The chariot-wheel of human progress is smeared with the blood of our martyrs and bedewed with the tears of their sufferings. Error revenges itself upon truth by persecution and posterity makes amends by tears and pains. We are here to-night assembled round the yet unextinguished ashes of Rammohun Roy not merely to atone for the errors of the past and perform a great act of national penance but derive from him the inspiration and guidance for our work in the future.

* * * * *

Amid the gathering difficulties of our situation, let us sit

at the feet of Rammohun Roy and hold communion with his Master-spirit. The light breaks in upon our spirit. The light breaks in upon us across the vista of years from him, who in this, as in other matters, has been to us the source of our illumination and of inspiration. For let it be remembered that Rammohun Roy was not only the founder of the Brahmo Samaj and the pioneer of all social reform in Bengal, but he was also the father of constitutional agitation in India. He started a newspaper, agitated—strenuonsly agitated—for the emancipation of the press and the abolition of *Sati;* he pressed for the separation of judicial and executive functions in the administration of criminal justice, and protested against men who are too young being appointed as members of the covenanted Civil Service. It is remarkable how he anticipated us in some of the great political problems which are the problems of to-day, of which one at least remains unsolved.

* * * * *

But the Raja was not only the Father of political agitation, his fame was even greater as a social and religious reformer. His activities were co-extensive with the entire range of our being. Everything that could conduce to our welfare, no matter to what department of human activity it belonged, was the theme of his incessant efforts. For he recognised the truth that to improve man in one direction is to stimulate his improvement in all directions. In the matter of social reform, sympathy for woman was the key-note of his creed. That too was the guiding principle of Vidyasagar's efforts. It was sympathy for women that led Vidyasagar to agitate for the remarriage of Hindu widows. It was sympathy for women that led Rammohun Roy to agitate for the abolition of Sati.

* * * * *

Rammohun Roy's great effort was to make the Hindu system conform to its enviroments. His work has not been

completed, though his spirit endures; and I trust that spirit, in its own good time and operating under happier and more auspicious circumstances, will lead to a transformation of Hindu society, suited to the requirements of the age. I can conceive of no more solemn obligation resting upon our countrymen than that they should recognise the changed circumstances under which they live and adapt themselves to those circumstances.

* * * * *

Sitting at the feet of Rammohun Roy, let us be imbued with his lofty spirit—his love of country, his devotion to truth, his enthusiasm for progress,—let us be regenerated by the touch of his great example, and we shall then have acquired the impulse which will carry us on to and will help us to secure for ourselves a place among the progressive nations of the earth and to accomplish those high destinies which, I fully believe, are reserved for us in the decrees of Providence.

RAMMOHUN ROY—AS A JURIST AND A POLITICIAN.

(BY N. N. GHOSH, ESQ., BAR-AT-LAW).

It is a remarkable proof of the Raja's versatility that such of his writings, as it has been possible to trace, on subjects connected with law and politics, exhibit deep research, acccurate knowledge, clearness of conception, and a firm grasp of principles. His paper, entitled *Brief Remarks regarding Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance*, may be cited as an illustration. Here the writer comes to the conclusion, as the result of his researches, that under the old Hindoo Law, women enjoyed rights which have been presented in a very much narrower form by modern commentators. "These restraints on female inheritance," the writer is shrewd enough to observe, "encourage, in a great degree, polygamy, a frequent source of the greatest misery in native families; a grand object of Hindoos being to secure a provision for their male offspring, the Law which relieves them from the necessity of giving an equal portion to their wives, removes a principal restraint on the indulgence of their inclinations in respect to the number they marry."

Within the present limits it is not possible to refer in detail to the evidence cited by the writer or to dwell on the keenness of the insight he exhibits into the causes of a social evil. His *Essay on the Rights of Hindoos over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal*, would do credit to any trained and professional lawyer deeply versed in the history of the Hindoo Law. One of his conclusions in this paper is that in following those expositions which best reconcile law with

reason, the author of the Bengal system is warranted by the highest sacred authority as well as by the example of the most revered of his predecessors, the author of the *Mitakshara.*

The Rule and Ordinance that was passed on the 14th March 1823, by Mr. Adam, Officiating Governor-General, curtailing the freedom of the press elicited a Memorial to the Supreme Court which had to register the Regulation. The Memorial, which was signed by several leading gentlemen of the town, was presumably drawn up by the Raja, who was one of its signatories. This proved unsuccessful, and a Petition of Appeal was addressed to His Majesty the King (George IV) in Council. This Petition also appears to have been the Raja's handiwork. The two documents are remarkable productions. For cogency of argument, accuracy of fact, and appreciation of principle, they could not be surpassed. No writer at the present day could put the case for liberty more effectively than the Raja has done. Space will not permit the making of any extracts, specially where a selection is difficult from among paragraphs almost every one of which is a gem rich and rare. The writings on Suttee, which one might *a priori* imagine to be so warm and vehement as to be devoid of balance, are themselves an illustration of the Raja's unfailing sobriety and clearness of vision.

Nowhere does he plead that every practice which is morally wrong has to be repressed by penal legislation. The issue he sets forth is clear and definite. He abstains, as far as possible, from the enunciation of abstract doctrines of sweeping generality, confines himself to the consideration of practical evils, material wrongs, and argues in effect that a practice which is not merely immoral, but criminal, must be treated as a crime. Whatever is productive of injury to the individual, and, through the individual, to the society, is criminal, and should be dealt with as such, all usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

That appears to be the substance of the Raja's contention, and it will hardly be resisted by the most fastidious philosopher of the *laisser faire* type. The breadth of the Raja's knowledge of the administration of the country, the accuracy of his insight, and the soundness of his opinions on many questions of Government, are well illustrated by his answers to the numerous questions put to him by the Select Committee of the House of Commons. It was certainly no ordinary person that could show as complete and masterly a knowledge of the practical operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India, and of the general character and condition of its native inhabitants, as he undoubtedly possessed of the *Upanishads* and of the Precepts of Jesus :

RAJA RAM MOHUN ROY AS A MAN OF LETTRES.

(BY MR. MOHINI MOHUN CHATTERJEE).

Forms of expression, though important, do not afford by themselves, an adequate criterion for judging a literary or generally an artistic character. *Technique* is great, but the idea underlying the subject is greater. Rammohun Roy's culture was so many-sided, his scholarship so wide and profound, his natural gifts so rare, that anxious thought and close study are needed for a proper appreciation of his position as a man of letters.

Considering the varied character of his writings, one is struck by his sturdy faith in his art as an engine of human progress. Primers of Grammar and Geography and abstruse Treatise on Law, Politics and Theology are alike members of his literary family. From popular songs to unpopular science, his literary hospitality is extended. His love of knowledge in its multiform aspects, beams out of his writings with equal radiance. As witness, his letter on English Education addressed to Lord Amherst. His motto may well have been the words of Goethe "Licht meir Licht,"—light more light.

His controversial writings are instinct with a singular love of truth and a reverence for freedom of thought. In form they are the productions of a scholar and a gentleman. Not a word, not a syllable has he written for mere effect or to hurt an antagonist's feelings. His method was justified by the result—conversion by controversy. Ram Chandra Vidyavagish and Dr. Adam were the fruits of his labours in his

fields. Read his Appeals to the Christian Public and judge. The filial piety of Mr. Marshman finds an apology for his father ; but Rammohun Roy has never needed one. "With the exception of this deviation from liberality (on the part of Dr. Marshman)," remarks Dr. Rees in his preface to the American Edition of the precepts of Jesus, "the controversy on both sides has been throughout conducted with a spirit of Christian candour and fairness." The following words of Rammohun himself indicate the spirit of his controversial writings better than anyting one might say—"I hope it will not be presumed that I intend to establish the preference of my faith over that of other men. The result of controversy on such a subject however multiplied must be ever unsatisfactory for the reasoning faculty, which leads them to certainty in things within its reach, produces no effect on questions beyond its comprehension."

Sincerity, according to Carlyle, is the test of heroism. A prominent quality of Rammohun Roy's writings is his transparent sincerity, which indeed is but the outward manifestation of his love of truth. He has not said a word that he did not feel to be true. In religion he discarded esotericism in every form and did not believe in deceiving the multitude for their own good. "By taking the path which conscience and sincerity direct," he says, "I, born a Brahmin, have exposed myself to the complainings and reproaches even of some of my relations whose prejudices are strong and whose temporal advantage depends on the present system. But however accumulated I can bear them tranquilly, trusting that a day will arrive when my humble endeavours will be viewed with justice,perhaps acknowledged with gratitude."However severe may be the tests applied, his literary honesty will come out the purer and brighter from the fire. He never misrepresents or misunderstands his antagonists. The whole of his writings will be scanned in vain for a single instance

of imputing to his adversary an opinion for the sole glory of demolishing it. He takes his opponents at their best. Scriptural texts, cited or relied on by him, are never mutilated, wrenched from context or divorced from their authorised meaning. Who will say, with the experience of our own days, that such honesty, which ought to be ordinary, is not deserving of extraordinary praise? Rammohun Roy has never allowed rhetoric to master logic or passion sobriety. The *Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin*, in so far as one can judge to whom the original is inaccessible, is a model of close logical reasoning. His highest praise is this, that there is not a line of fine writing in all his works.

In the political writings of Rammohun Roy, one is impressed by the dutiful care with which he avoids making a statement not resting on his own experience or legitimate inference arising from it. In concluding his answers to questions on the Judicial System of India, he says, "In preparing my replies to these queries I have not been biassed by the opinions of any individual nor have I consulted with any person or men or referred to any work on the subject of India. I have, for the facts, consulted only my own recollections and in regard to the opinions expressed, I have been guided only by my conscience."

An attentive student of the writings of Rammohun Roy finds on every page the stamps of thoroughness, sobriety, straight-forwardness and modesty. His conscientiousness and sympathy cannot fail to impress the open mind.

The conditions under which this imperfect sketch has been prepared prevents any attempt at adequate treatment of Rammohun Roy's form and expression.

But the from is worthy of the substance. The stately and dignified prose of his English works calls to mind the masters who adorned English literature in the latter period of the last century and the early years of the present. Since his time

many of his countrymen have achieved eminence as writers of English prose but few have attained such a style of classical purity as Rammohun. His expressions may at times offend against the rules of Grammar, but never against the rules of style or taste. Bentham's appreciation of Rammohun Roy's English style is too well-known to need reproduction.

THE NATIONAL AND UNIVERSAL IN RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY.

(BY DR. BRAJENDRA NATH SEAL).

For a right understanding and estimate of the Raja's thought and utterance, it is necessary to bear in mind the two essentially distinct but equally indispensable parts which the Raja played on the historic stage. There was Raja Rammohun Roy, the cosmopolite, the rationalist thinker, the representative man with a universal outlook on human civilisation and its historic march; a Brahmin of the Brahmins, and cheirophan moralising from the commanding height of some Eiffel Tower on the far-seen vistas and outstretched prospects of the world's civilisation, Jeremy Bentham's admired and dearly loved collaborator in the service of mankind; the peer of the Humes, the Gibbons, the Voltaires, the Volneys, the Diderots or any Free-thinker or Rationalist of them all. For him all idols were broken, and the parent of all illusions, Authority, had been hacked to pieces. He, the cosmopolite, was daunted by no speculative doubts, discouraged by no craven fears. For him the veil of Isis was torn; the Temple had been rent in twain and the Holy of Holies lay bare to his gaze! For he had had his disillusionment, was indeed a thorough *roue* of the *monde* (or *demimonde*) intellectual. Calmly fearlessly, truthfully, he probed, fathomed, dissected. And by deep meditation and brooding, he had won a glimpse of the Truth.

But there was another and equally characteristic part played by the Raja—the part of the Nationalist Reformer, the constructive practical social legislator,—the Renovator of National Scriptures and Revelations. For the Raja was

cast in Nature's regal mould. His was the work of half a dozen giants. His name was Legion. Hindu Pandit, Zaburdasht Moulvie, Christian Padree, the Rishi of a new Manwantara or Yuga, the Imam or Mahdi of a new Tradition, the Prophet or Nabi of a New Dispensation—by what name shall I call this man?

Yes, the Raja carried on single-handed the work of Nationalist Reform and Scripture Renovation and Interpretation for three such different cultures and civilisations as the Hindu, the Christian and the Mahommedan. Unfortunately the *Manezaratul Adiyan* and other Arabic and Persian works in which the Raja developed his scheme of Moslem religious or socio-religious restoration are lost. But his later writings dealing with the Hindu and Christian scriptures remain and are an endless mine of the most precious material to the student of comparative religion, sociology and ethnology.

* * * * *

The Raja was no doctrinaire. He had a wholesome historical instinct, a love of concrete embodiments and institutions, such as characterise the born religious and social reformer. A rationalist and universalist in every pulse of his being, he was no believer in the cult of the worship of Reason, of naked logical Abstractions. The universal guiding principle of the Love of God and man he sought and found in the scriptures of the nations, and rose from the barren religion of Nature or Theo-philanthropy of his eighteenth century predecessors to a liberal interpretation and acceptance of the Historic Revelation and scriptures, not indeed in any supernatural sense, but as embodiments of the collective sense, of races of mankind, and as concentrating and focussing that principle of Authority which, in this mundane state, is an indispensable cement and foundation, an elementary factor of communal life, whether in the social, the political or the religious sphere.

"I have often lamented", says the Raja, "that in our general researches into theological truth, we are subject to the conflict of so many obstacles. When we look to the traditions of ancient nations, we often find them at variance with each other; and when discouraged by this circumstance we appeal to reason as a surer guide, we soon find how incompetent it is alone to conduct us to the object of our pursuit. We often find that instead of facilitating our endeavours or clearing up our perplexities, it only serves to generate an universal doubt incompatible with principles on which our comfort and happiness mainly depend. The best method perhaps is neither to give ourselves up exclusively to the guidance of the one or the other, but by a proper use of the lights furnished by both endeavour to improve our intellectual and moral faculties."

This has the ring of the "large utterance of the early gods," and its sanity, its balance, its nice mental equipoise, is beyond the reach of the Voltaires and Volneys of the world. This rationalistic Raja has verily been the founder and father of the nineteenth century conception of the scriptures which discards supernaturalism and miracle-mongering, and yet retains and reassures for the race those precious treasures those storehouses of moral and spiritual force, and of living authority. The Raja's method of interpretation was at once a marvellous 'Novum Organum' applied to the scriptures of the world, and a sure instinct anticipating the historic and evolutionary method of modern sociology. The essential and vital principles held in solution in the Hindu and Christian cultures and civilisations precipitated themselves. The spirit of reason and universalism was breathed into those ancient bodies for giving them an immortality of youth and fresh national vigour.

THE SPIRIT OF RAMMOHUN ROY

(By Mr. R. Venkat Ratnam, M.A.,L.T)

Extracts from the Presidential Address to the Calcutta Theistic Conference of 1906.

* * * * *

To my mind, Rammohun Roy is distinctly different from the other great men of India before his day. He is the father of a new race of Indian heroes. He heralds a new epoch in Indian History. His illustrious predecessors—mighty souls that have so richly dowered India with truth and goodness by their holy careers—were mostly sages, a few philanthropists, some patriots. But he was the first and (let me add) the greatest *nation-builder* that India has produced. His spirit ramified into diverse branches covering the whole area of national life. In his career is illustrated the harmonious play of that cycle of forces which, by their conjoint operation evolve and shape out a modern nation. In range of vision, in reach of sympathy, in versatility of powers, in variety of activities, in co-ordination of interests and in coalescence of ideals—in fine, as realising an all-round, all-receptive life in its manifold fulness, Rammohun Roy is a unique figure in the history of India, if not, in the annals of the race. I may attempt to illustrate this by a reference to this, our National Week. Here is the national life, as it were attracted to and centred in the metropolis. Here is a round of gatherings—Congress and Conferences—calculated by their deliberations and subsequent working to foster the growth of a sound, steady, complete nation. In the whole hierarchy of Indian Worthies, is there another name that evinces equal fitness with that of Raja Rammohun Roy to be the ruling spirit of this great week, the presiding genius of all these gatherings ? Is not their very mutual appreciation an emblem of his spirit ? Verily, he is the Father of modern India ; he is the *Rishi* of the modern age. * * *

Comprehensive past all comparison as was the Rajah's

view of a full life, he was essentially a religious genius. He knew that human growth was endogenous—from the soul outwards. He was sure that out of the heart were all the issues of life. His faith in the saving, regenerating power of the Spirit was unbounded. To him a being not illumined by belief and trust in God, a progress not impelled by a religious force, was worse than inconceivable—it was degenerating, degrading. To the myriad ills of India the sovereign remedy was a living faith in a wise and living God—neither a cloistered faith that scorns and shuns the world, nor a busy careworn faith that assigns the leisure hour to a hurried worship,nor the prudent faith that imports a god to watch a truant world, nor yet a speculative faith that prefixes a creator to a law-governed universe. It was a direct vision of an indwelling Glory, a personal communion with an immanent Spirit, an implicit trust in an all regulating Providence, a whole-hearted devotion to an all-controlling Purpose, a cheerful obedience to an all-governing Will, a conscious participation in an all-saving Grace, a rapturous delight in an all-entrancing Beauty. It was a faith to which the universe was a consecrated temple, the soul a holy shrine, conscience a sacred oracle, duty a divine ordinance, truth the imperishable gospel, love the perfect rule, life a progressive pilgrimage, humanity an abounding grace. It was a faith that interpreted law as the method, force as the will,and matter as the localised potency, of God : it was a faith that esteemed the world as a reflection, the soul as a vision, and history as a panoramic presentation of the nature and the purpose of the Deity. With Rammohun Roy the man this faith—this sublime invigorative theism—was a passion, a power and a joy, that made of him a hero and a prophet. To Rammohun Roy the nation-builder this vital, fertile faith—a faith lofty as the love of God and ample as the wants of man—furnished alike the enduring basis and

the cementing strength, the ample range and the towering greatness, of a united and vigorous nation.

* * * *

This spirit of a deep and broad faith he proceeded to apply to, and realise in, the national life. The work of Rammohun Roy, as of every great *nation-builder*, was four-fold : to reassess the national heritage, to replenish the national resources, to infuse a new quickening and harmonising spirit, and to use the awakened energies for the new national wants and demands.

The hope and assurance of a reviving nation springs largely from its "storied past." Therein lies the evidence of national possibilities, the guarantee of national solvency and in a large measure the impetus to national endeavour. The inspiration of the ancestral example is the cheering outlook of the dutiful successor, the acquisition of the sturdy sire, the starting capital of the ambitious son ; the glory of past national achievement, the load-star—the light on the path—of the advancing generations. India's wealth, her richest acquisition, and her highest achievement, is the sublime consciousness, the vision, of the all-permeating and all-transfiguring, all-embracing and all-fulfilling, all-absorbing and all-transcending Spirit. Limitations—nay, aberrations—there might be ; but the distinguishing mark, the predominant note, the prime concern, of blessed *Bharatavarsha* is God-consciousness. The central principle, the master passion, 'the driving power,' of her accredited worthies is God-vision. To trace the lineaments and study the ways, to follow the foot-steps and bow to the will, to imitate the purposes and reproduce the nature—in a word, to realise and fulfil oneself as a projected emblem—of the divine Spirit, is the one prevailing national ideal, surviving all vicissitudes ; and to have saved from oblivion, purified from accretions, and readjusted for modern needs this indwell-

ing Theistic spirit of India, was the Raja's high service to the nation. His translations of the Upanishads, his elucidation of the Vedanta, his exposition of the *gayatri*, his defence of Hindu Theism, his advocacy of spiritual worship, his passionate pleading for a devout life as incomparably superior to the most engrossing ceremonialism—all these were suggested and sustained by that patriotic and nation-building purpose of re-instating a living liberal faith amidst clogging symbolism and enervating superstition. He re-directed the national intellect to the teachings of the ancient national scriptures, and reopened the national soul to the inspiration of the most honoured national seers.

* * * *

To the keen gaze of his soul there lay bare, amidst the puzzling heap of national scripture, a fund of eternal truth and inexpressible joy which, sympathetically studied, judiciously adopted, intelligently imparted, and reverently received, might form the pabulum—the staple food—for his and many a coming generation of eager seekers after God. In this spirit (as Max Muller has thoughtfully pointed out), not of a prudent adherence to mere antiquity, but of an honest search for and a grateful appreciation of the seeds of imperishable truth, that he sought to lay down the Vedanta of the Upanishads,stripped of its strange and disguising coverings, as the basis of the new national life. There he rejoiced to meet the seers of ancient wisdom—types of Emerson's "teachers from within"—proclaiming (to adopt the happy language of the same sage) a God, not of tradition, not of rhetoric, not even of inferential conviction, but of direct sight—a vision and an ecstasy—that circled the world with a halo of celestial glory and transported the soul with the raptures of Heaven. There he was grateful to find a revelation of God's truth that for loftiness of conception, depth of insight, serenity of contemplation,

fervour of devotion, austerity of discipline, perfection of disinterestedness, and intensity of beatitude, would ever remain unsurpassed, if at all equalled, in the history of the world. * * * *

Rammohun Roy, the ardent restorer of the Upanishadic Vedant as the deepest insight of the Hindu (the Eastern) genius, was likewise the gifted interpreter of the richest expression of the Semitic (the Western) genius—the heart of Jesus. The India of the Rishis, rich and blessed in the wealth of the soul, was, however, not—could not be—the India of Rammohun Roy. Alike external pressure and internal throb were all along modifying and recasting the national ideals and replenishing and redirecting the national energies. * * * *

Heaven had ordained India to be the spiritual *Prayag* of the world—the sacred spot of the congruent confluence of the mighty world-currents of East and West—of the joy and the strength that come of a lasting, vital harmony of intellect and will, knowledge and power. A vaster and more comprehensive synthesis than had hitherto been realised—had hitherto been, perhaps, possible—had to be attempted : a reverent garnering of "the wisdom of the East and the West," a holy communion of sage and prophet in truth and goodness. In this devout spirit of genuine yet thoughtful enthusiasm Rammohun Roy submitted his "Precepts of Jesus, the guide to peace and happiness" to the world, as a spiritual and ethical code calculated powerfully to conduce to the elevation of "men's ideas to high and liberal notions of God" and to "the maintenance of the peace and harmony of mankind at large." To bring home to the "business and bosom" of India the serene godliness, the self-sacrificing love, the ethical vigour and the winning grace of Jesus, and thus to enshrine the Heaven-appointed author of the Christian life and civilization of the west in the heart of the nation, was the avowed object of this remarkable publication.

The warm controversy it led to was, perhaps, the indirect testimony to its worth and its necessity. Now that with the lapse of nearly three generations all the personal and occasional element in that tough fight for truth has ceased to disturb the vision, the work may justly be valued as the prophetic forecast of that great reconciliation—that organic federation—of East and West, through which every faithful and progressive nation will realize the fulness of its potency in a universal humanity. The future of India is rich with a promise almost baffling persent estimation, even because it appears to be that eternal capital of the Spirit-empire, whither pilgrim souls from all quarters, with their heart-offerings of ideals, aspirations, endeavours and achievements, are drawn to the shrine of immortal Love, and whence will issue forth a Light radiant as the glory of the Lord and a Peace passing all mere human understanding. That this ancient land, thus high-honoured of Heaven, may fulfil this lofty destiny, depends undoubtedly on her readiness to imbibe this catholic—liberal and reverent—spirit of Rammohun Roy—a spirit inspired by the faith and active in the hope that it is with the sublime soul-contributions and the loving heart-tributes of all worthy peoples that God will at last make "the pile complete." This spirit, now fairly familiar, at any rate in theory, it was the unique distinction of Rammohun Roy to have inaugurated; and here is one further proof that he is the builder of modern Indian nation, the father of new India.

It is very cheering to note that this gradual commingling of the best in the East and in the West for the ultimate perfection of both, aye, of the whole humanity, as being Heaven's own method, is realised in an increasing degree on all hands.

* * * *

This was an intuitive perception of Rammohun Roy; who was, not only (to use Prof. Sir M. Williams's language)

'the first earnest-minded investigator of the science of comparative religion that the world has produced," but also (as Prof. Max Muller put it) the first to complete a connected life-current between the East and the West—the inspired engineer in the world of faith that cut the channel of communication, the spiritual Suez, between sea and sea land-locked in the rigid sectarianism of exclusive revelation, and set their separate surges of national life into one mighty world-current of universal humanity.

INDEX

LIST OF SOURCES USE   N THIS LIFE.

The letters of William Adam. In the *Inqui*   Nov. 4, 1882, the Author, Miss S. D. Collect, says: "I have been so fortunate as to be favoured by the executrix of the late Mr. William Adam (formerly a Unitarian missionary at Calcutta) with much interesting matter from his private letters relating to the Rajah."

Other previously unpublished materials. In the same letter the Author says: Some of my Brahmo friends in India have supplied me with valuable materials for the work, which will be quite new to the English public." Among these may be included history of the Brahmo Samaj by P. S. N. Sastri.

The published works of Rammohun Roy, as cited in text, notably "*The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy*: edited by Jogendra Chunder Ghose, M.A., L.L.B.: compiled and published by Eshan Chunder Bose. Calcutta: Bhowanipore, Oriental press. 1885." 2 vols. with biographical introduction by the editor.

Adam, William : A Lecture on the Life and Labours of Rammohun Roy; Calcutta, 1879.

Correspondence relative to the Prospects of Christianity and the means of promoting its reception in India. Cambridge, U.S.A.. 1824; London, 1825.

Aspland, Robert: A Sermon on occasion of the lamented death of the Raja Rammohun Roy, with a biographical sketch. London, 1833.

Barth, Auguste: The Religions of India, translated by J. Wood. London, 1882.

Carpenter, Lant: A Review of the Labours, Opinions, and Character of Rajah Rammohun Roy, in a discourse on occasion of his death; and a biographical memoir, to which is subjoined an examination of some derogatory statements in the *Asiatic Journal*. London and Bristol, 1833.

Carpenter, Lant, and others: A Biographical Memoir of the late Rajah Rammohun Roy, together with a series of extracts from his writings. Calcutta, 1835.

Carpenter, Mary: The Last Days in England of the Raja Rammohun Roy. London, 1866.

Chatterji, Nagendranath; Life of Rammohun Roy. Calcutta, 1880.

Chatterji, Nanda Mohun: Some Anecdotes from the Life of Ram Mohun Roy. Calcutta, 1881

Collet, Sophia Dobson: The Brahmo Year Book,—1882. London: Williams & Norgate.

Outlines and Episodes of Brahmic History, reprinted from the *Modern Review*, January, 1884 W. Speaight & Sons, London, 1884.

Article on Rammohun Roy in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Digby, John: Preface to Reprint of Rammohun Roy's Abridgement of the Vedanta. London, 1817.

Drummond, Wm. Hamilton, D.D.: A learned Indian in search of a Religion. London, 1833.

Fox, W.J.: A Discourse on occasion of the Death of Rammohun Roy. London, 1833.

Ghose, Jogendra Chunder: Biographical Introduction to the English works of Rajah Ram Mohun Roy. Calcutta, 1885.

Heber, Right Rev. Reginald, Bishop of Calcutta: Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India . . . and Letters written from India. London, 1828.

Jay, William: Works. London, 1843.

Kemble, Fanny: Record of a Girlhood, an autobiograpy. London 1878.

Leonard, G.S.: History of the Brahmo Samaj. Calcutta, 1879.

Macdonald, Rev. K. S.: Rajah Ram Mohun Roy, the Bengali Religious Reformer. Calcutta, 1879.

Marshman, Dr. Joshua: A Defence of the Deity and Atonement of Jesus Christ, in reply to Ram-mohun Roy, of Calcutta. London, 1822.

Martin, Montgomery: History of the British Colonies. London, 1835.

Navakanta Chattopadhyaya: Short Life and Character of Rajah Ram Roy. Dacca, 1890.

Parliamentary: Papers relating to Hindu Widows. 1821 to 1830.

Porter, Rev.J.S. Scott The Growth of the Gospel: A sermon occasioned by the lamented death of the Raja Rammohun Roy. Belfast, 1833.

Smith, George: Life of Alexander Duff. London, 1879.

de Tassy, Garcin: Rudiments de la langue Hindustani. Paris, 1833.

Ware, Rev. Henry: Correspondence relative to the Prospects of Christianity, etc. Cambridge, U.S.A., 1824; London, 1825.

Warner, Rev. Richard, Rector of Great Chalfield, Wilts.: A Sermon on Charity, the greatest of Christian Graces. 1832.

Periodicals (Magazines, Newspapers, etc.) contemporary with Rammohun Roy:—

Asiatic Journal, Bristol Gazette, Bristol Mercury, Calcutta Journal, Court Journal, Friend of India, Hurkaru, Indian Free Press, Indian Gazette, Jonn Bull, Mirat-ul-Akhbar, Monthly Repository, Samachar Chundrika, Sambad Kaumudi, Sumachar Durpun, Tattwabodhini Patrika, Times.

Also article by Babu Kishary Chand Mitra in the *Calcutta Review* for December, 1845, and an article by Keshub Chunder Sen in the *Indian Mirror* for July 1st, 1895.

RAMMOHUN'S WORKS.

The following is the list, given in the order of time, of Rammohun's works :—

1803 or 1804.—Tuhfatul Muwahhidin, or a gift to Deists. Murshidabad. Translated into English by Moulavi Obaidullah El Obaide, Calcutta, 1884.
1815.—Translation into Bengali of the Vedanta Sutra.
1816.—Abridgement of the Vedant.
1816.—Translation into English and Bengali of the Kena and Isha Upanishads.
1817.—Translation into English and Bengali of the Katha, Munduk and Mandukya Upanishads.
1817.—A Defence of Hindu Theism. Parts I. and II.
1818.—A Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of, the practice of Burning Widows alive.
1820.—A Second Conference.
1820.—The Precepts of Jesus : the guide to peace and happiness : extracted from the Books of the New Testament ascribed to the Four Evangelists.
1820.—An appeal to the Christian Public in defence of the Precepts of Jesus.
1821.—A Second Appeal.
1821.—Brahminical Magazine, I., II and III.
1821.—Sambad Kaumudi.
1822.—Mirat-ul-Akhbar.
1822.—Brief Remarks on Ancient Female Rights.
1822.—Answers to Four Questions.
1823.—Third and Final Appeal to the Christian Public.
1823.—Memorial against Government Press Order of March, 14.
1823.—Ram Dass's papers.
1823.—Brahminical Magazine, No. IV.
1823.—Humble Suggestions to his Countrymen who believe in One God.
1823.—Medicine for the Sick (in Bengali).
1823.—Letter on English Education.
1824.—Prospects of Christianity.
1824.—Appeal for Famine-Smitten Natives in South Deccan.
1825.—Different Modes of Worship.
1826.—Bengali Grammar in the English Language.
1827.—Divine Worship by means of the Gayuttri.
1827.—Answer of an Hindu to the question : Why do you frequent a Unitarian place of worship ?
1829.—Religious Instructions founded on Sacred Authorities.
1830.—Trust Deed of Brahmo Samaj.
1830.—Address to Lord William Bentinck on the Abolition of Suttee.
1830.—Abstract of the Arguments regarding the Burning of Widows considered as a Religious Rite.
1830.—The Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal.
1831.—Revenue System of India.
1831.—Questions and Answers on the Judicial System of India.
1831.—Additional Queries respecting the Condition of India.
1832.—Remarks on Settlement in India by Europeans.